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Superstar-gazing at World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland

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Palestine, Israel declare ceasefire at Egypt summit

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How you can win over 250 prizes in Valentine blowout

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DepEd fails to raise funds for damaged schools

Tanong ng Bayan / A22

Year of the Rooster: Buenas para sa 'Pinas?

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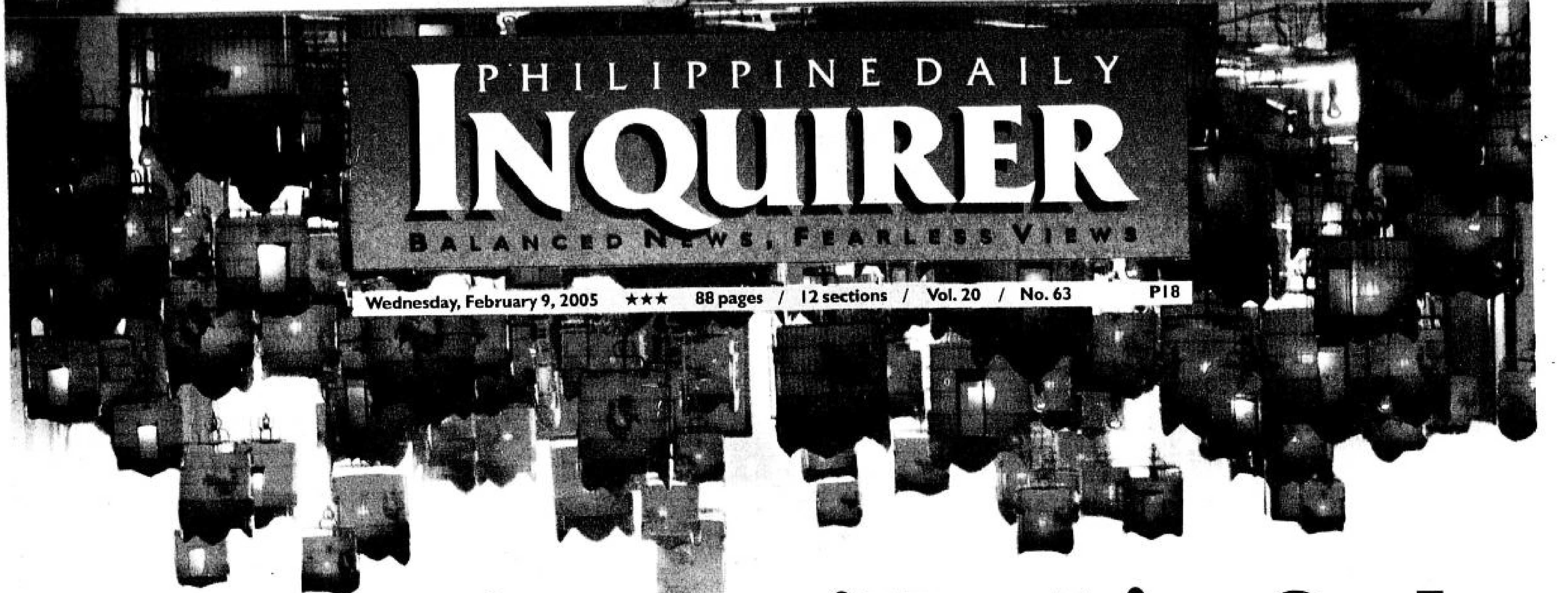


PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Wednesday, February 9, 2005 ★★★ 88 pages / 12 sections / Vol. 20 / No. 63 P18

17 soldiers killed in Sulu

AFP says 30 of Nur's followers slain

ZAMBOANGA CITY—The Armed Forces ordered the bombardment of rebel positions on Jolo yesterday after 17 soldiers were killed in intensified fighting with Moro guerrillas over two days.

Up to 30 gunmen loyal to former Moro National Liberation Front leader Nur Misuari may have also been killed in the clashes in Panamao and outlying towns, Southern Command chief Lt. Gen. Alberto Braganza said.

Local officials said as many as 40 soldiers may have died in gun battles since Monday.

"They have asked for it and we'll give it to them," Braganza said as he deployed hundreds of Marines and ordered Air Force planes to blast the gunmen holed up in Panamao.

"I have ordered air strikes to punish these renegades," he said. "We are pursuing less than 500 armed men that are holding out in the mountains."

Braganza said Misuari's MNLF followers had merged with about 400 members of the Abu Sayyaf.

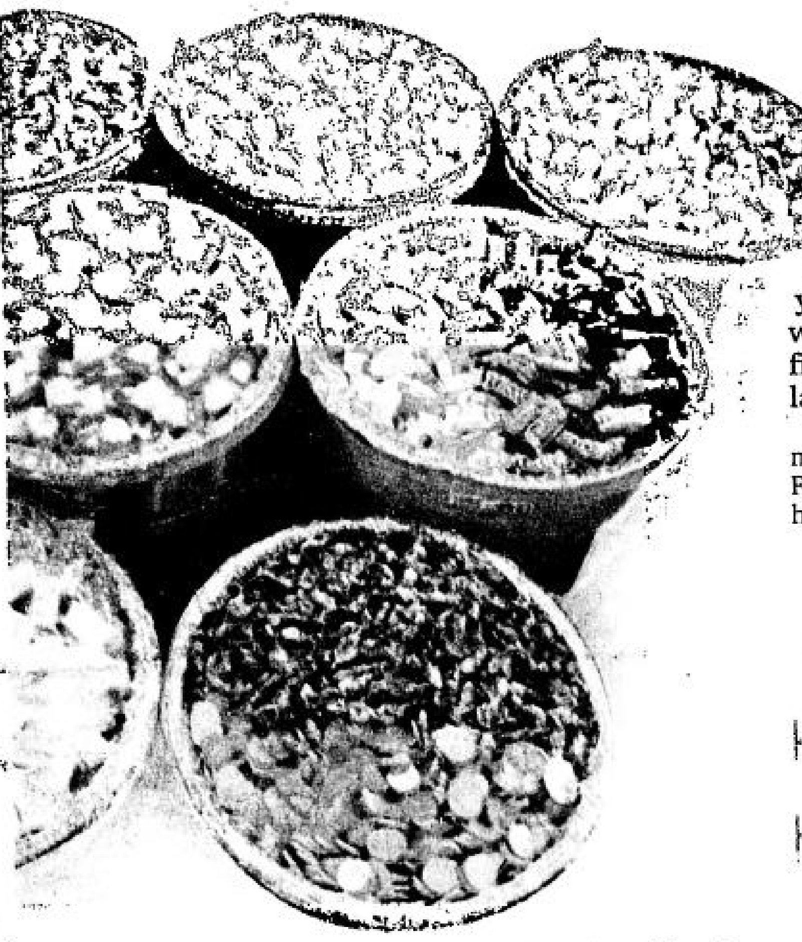
Misuari formerly headed the MNLF, which accepted limited autonomy and signed a peace deal with the government in 1996.

But violence flared again in 2001 and Misuari was imprisoned on charges of rebellion, which carries a maximum sentence of life imprisonment.

Many of Misuari's armed followers still maintain strongholds in Jolo and have been accused of supporting the Abu Sayyaf.

The Abu Sayyaf was best known for kidnapping foreigners and Filipinos for ransom until it allegedly killed at least 100 peo-

17 SOLDIERS/ A20



KUNG HEI FAT CHOY! A sweet taste of the Chinese lunar New Year, the Year of the Wooden Rooster in Taipei. (Top) Roosters in cages are displayed in Harbor City on the waterfront of Hong Kong. AFP/REUTERS

MARINES board a Navy transport ship in Zamboanga City bound for Jolo to reinforce troops, who have been in battle for the past two days with the loyalists of jailed Moro rebel leader Nur Misuari. The government sensing is that hardcore militants have stepped up attacks to try to sabotage the peace talks.

Catholic Chinoys can still toast the New Year

By Blanche S. Rivera

HOW CAN Chinese-Filipino Catholics live it up it being Ash Wednesday today, and their faith urges them to ponder on their mortality? But they want to paint the town red. And they want to feast on all the delicacies of the first day of the Year of the Rooster.

It can be done. "Tikoy" (the celebratory rice cakes) and ashes can mix. How? *(See related story in Metro, Page A22.)*

Ask your bishop for a dispensation.

The Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines said the Catholic Chinese can still celebrate the Chinese New Year with all the hoopla as long they ask their bishops for permission to skip the fasting and abstinence

CATHOLIC/ A20

So, is Marcos money intact?

SO WHERE'S the Marcos loot?

Anakpawis party-list Rep. Rafael Mariano posed this question as he challenged President Macapagal-Arroyo to show proof that the $683 million in recovered assets of late dictator Ferdinand Marcos was still intact.

"The multimillion-dollar question is: 'Is the ill-gotten wealth still intact? Where is it?'" Mariano asked.

In a statement, Mariano said the President was turning the victims of Marcos atrocities into treasure hunters "looking and waiting for luck."

He said part of the money might have been used for the campaign of Ms Arroyo in the 2004 presidential election.

"We will not stoop to that kind of allegation," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said in a phone interview when asked to comment on Mariano's challenge.

Bunye dismissed Mariano's call, saying the President gave a commitment to set aside $200 million from the $683 million for the compensation of the victims of human rights violations during the Marcos regime.

The government cannot give the compensation until the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law (CARL), which requires that all recovered ill-gotten Marcos

SO, IS MARCOS/ A21

Bongbong: Not me but gov't duty to pay victims

HONOLULU—The son of late dictator Ferdinand Marcos told a federal judge that it was the Philippine government's responsibility—and not his family's—to indemnify thousands of victims of martial law abuses.

Ilocos Norte Gov. Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr., who is in Hawaii on a goodwill tour, attended a closed hearing Monday before US District Judge Manuel Real.

A US court ruling last week which upheld in effect a Philippine Supreme Court order forfeiting $683 million of Marcos assets to the government has stirred new controversy over how the Marcos victims could be indemnified.

Bongbong spoke publicly about the case only through his lawyer.

"My client supports the settlement and its prompt funding, but

BONGBONG/ A21

Let's impeach GMA, Pimentel tells Philconsa

By Michael Lim Ubac

FOR ALLEGEDLY violating the Constitution and betraying the public trust on three counts, President Macapagal-Arroyo should be impeached, Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Q. Pimentel Jr. said last night.

In a speech before the Philippine Constitution Association (Philconsa), Pimentel said Ms Arroyo committed the following:

- Illegal use of the trust funds raised through the road user's tax and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (Owwa) for

LET'S/ A5

JOAN BONDOC

A PALE and feverish Joseph Estrada arrives by helicopter.

Erap back in hospital; pneumonia, says doc

By Armand N. Nocum

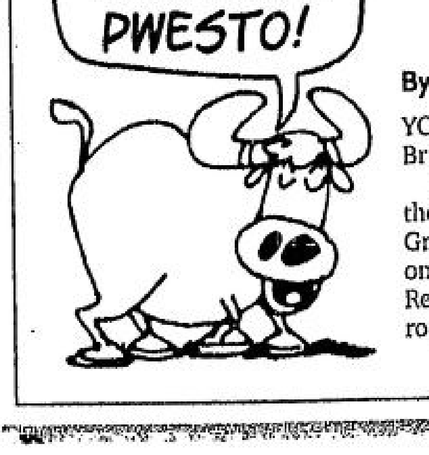
JOSEPH Estrada's knees are in tip-top shape, but he's back in the hospital again.

His physician, Lorenzo Hocson, told the INQUIRER in a phone interview yesterday afternoon that the ousted President had pneumonia. "It's not his legs. The operation was very successful," the doctor said of the knee replacement surgery that Estrada went through at the Hong Kong Adventist Hospital in December.

Estrada, 67, was airlifted from his rest house in Tanay, Rizal—where he is being held on plunder and perjury charges—to the Cardinal Santos Medical Center in San Juan before noon yesterday.

San Juan is considered Estrada turf. The homes of the ex-President, his partners and his sons,

ERAP/ A6


IBA NA ANG NASA PWESTO!

Do you need all these men, Mikey?

By Nikko Dizon

YOU'D think the Sultan of Brunei had landed.

More than 30 members of the elite Presidential Security Group (PSG) were deployed on Monday to meet Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo and his family at the Cen-

DO YOU/ A4

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Southern Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/02/09/05

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Second FRONT PAGE

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School rehab funds barely trickling in

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

THE FUND-RAISING drive for the more than 1,300 public schools destroyed by the deadly typhoons that hit Luzon late last year is in danger of failing miserably.

Three weeks into the campaign, the Department of Education said it was only able to raise a tenth of the P500 million it needed to reconstruct the schools and replace the damaged learning materials.

The DepEd had hoped to raise the amount by Feb. 18 so it could finish the reconstruction before the school opening in June.

On Jan. 18 at the launching of their "Sagip Eskwela (Save Our Schools)" campaign, Education Secretary Florencio Abad said he felt confident they could raise P500 million in a month's time. They even raised P21 million that day.

On Monday, Abad dejectedly admitted they had failed to reach their target.

The DepEd reported it had so far received P48.1 million in donations from 14 private foundations and companies, including the Australian government.

The Australian government had been the first to contribute to the campaign, donating A$400,000 or P17.4 million last December.

Other groups that contributed were: the Coca-Cola Foundation, Imagimax, Intel Foundation, Juan Lualhati Cojuangco Foundation, GMA Kapuso Foundation, Luis Lim Memorial Foundation, Mirant-Philippines Foundation, Petron Foundation, Premium Deposit Inc., Readers' Digest, STI Colleges, United Nations Children's Fund and the United Teachers' Credit Cooperative.

The DepEd said its present budget and the forthcoming funds from the National Disaster Coordinating Council could hardly cover the needed P500 million.

Check or cash donations are accepted at the Sagip Eskwela Secretariat at the DepEd Central Office in Pasig City. A contribution will be rewarded with a tax certificate worth 150 percent of the donation. For more information, the DepEd could be reached at 633-2778 or its website, www.sagipeskwela.ph.

Meanwhile, Abad was shocked that some public school teachers had opposed his draft order not to hold extracurricular activities during class hours.

"The idea came from them. They were complaining to me [that these activities] get in the way of their teaching," he said.

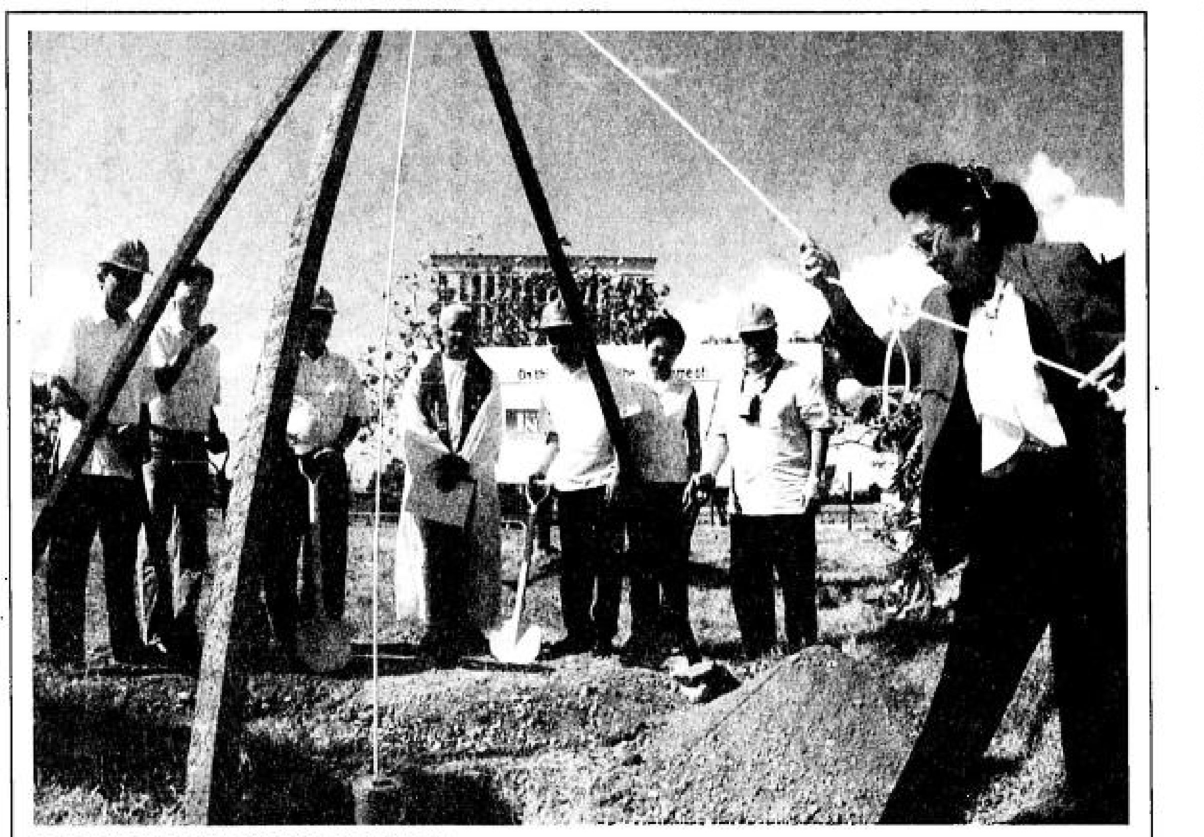
Nevertheless, Abad refrained from signing the draft order. Sources said the veteran congressman wanted to enlist the support of the teachers first.

Last week, the secretary said he would soon be signing a memorandum that would ban what he deemed were unnecessary class suspensions.

According to the order, public schools could no longer hold beauty contests, talent searches, sports fests, parades and the like during school days.

So far, none of the public school teachers interviewed by media agreed with the order.

They did not agree that limiting extracurricular activities would boost the students' performance. They said such activities were part of the learning process.



PRINT TOWN GOES TO CEBU

CDN PHOTO/TONEE DESPOJO

INQUIRER chair Marixi R. Prieto lowers the time capsule during groundbreaking rites for the new home of Print Town, Cebu Daily News and Philippine Daily Inquirer in the North Reclamation Area in Cebu City. Looking on are, from left, Gil Pangilinan, Print Town director; Paolo Prieto, INQ-7 president; lawyer Pat Garcia, Inquirer Publications Inc. chair; Fr. Vic Labao; Henry Santos, Print Town vice president; Eileen Mangubat, CDN-Inquirer Publications Inc. publisher, and Macario Rufino, Print Town chair. The time capsule contained bottles of ink, newsprint, the Feb. 8 issues of PDI, CDN and Bandera and the aluminum plates used in the production of the day's issue.

No fireworks in Mike, Jamby face-off

By Michael Lim Ubac

SEN. JAMBY Madrigal and Environment Secretary Mike Defensor finally had their face-off last night at the Senate, with the senator calling the secretary the "godfather" of the nation's national resources.

But make no mistake, Madrigal and Defensor still had not kissed and made up at the start of the Senate plenary deliberations on the budget of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Madrigal tried to impress upon the "juvenile" Defensor that young as he might be, he was still accountable to the people when it came to the state of the country's environment.

"At his disposal, he controls a department that is crucial to the constitutional principle on the protection of the ecology and promotion of national patrimony," said Madrigal.

A skeptical Defensor, who had incurred the ire of the senator for erroneously linking the Madrigal family to mining and logging operations in the provinces of Quezon and Aurora, simply smiled.

Defensor was in the Senate to help Sen. Manuel Villar, chair of the Senate finance committee, defend the DENR budget.

Madrigal said that the timber license agreement (TLA) issued by the DENR was "a privilege not a right."

"The power to rescind lies within the discretion of the DENR secretary. Therefore, if it's not for the best interest of the nation, he should decide on what's best for the environment," she said.

"So why can't he rescind the TLAs [issued by his predecessors]? He knows that the [TLAs are] destructive to the environment," added Madrigal.

Villar, sponsor of the DENR budget, repeatedly moved for the suspension of the session because Defensor could not provide the answers.

Noting that the suspensions were delaying the proceedings, Madrigal then moved to suspend the Senate rules barring agency or department heads concerned from directly answering during budget interpellations.

"Because of the technical nature of my questions, it will be faster if the representative of the DENR will personally answer my questions," said Madrigal.

All the senators present then agreed to suspend the rules, and reset the interpellation for 4 p.m.

Senate has the numbers to archive VAT—Osmeña

By Christine O. Avendaño

OPPOSITION Sen. Sergio Osmeña III yesterday proposed that the Senate "archive" the bill to increase the value-added tax (VAT) rate, claiming that those opposed to the measure already had the numbers to defeat it.

Osmeña counted 12 senators as supporters of his initiative—the nine-member minority bloc plus three from the administration.

Administration Senators Joker Arroyo, Manuel Villar and Rodolfo Biazon are against the tax measure, which seeks to increase the VAT rate from 10 percent to 12 percent, claiming it would directly hit the middle class and the poor.

But Sen. Ralph Recto, chair of the Senate committee on ways and means, shrugged off Osmeña's suggestion.

"I don't think that there is any serious move to archive the VAT bill," Recto told reporters after a two-hour committee hearing.

He was confident that at the end of the day, majority of the 23-member Senate would come out with an "acceptable" VAT law, something that he said would be "progressive, just and fair."

Recto said the VAT hearings would continue for one more week before his committee comes out with a report for the plenary.

Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima told the hearing that the VAT bill was the easiest and "most even to implement."

He said that in other countries, this tax was the primary source of revenue and that the Philippines' 10-percent VAT rate was the lowest among countries using the VAT system.

Osmeña told reporters after the hearing that the Senate would consider other tax measures instead of the VAT bill.

Recto said his committee would likely come out with a two-tiered VAT rate.

"We will be imposing additional excise taxes on goods consumed by the affluent," he said, possibly by increasing from 20 percent to 40 percent the excise tax on luxury consumption.

Recto said the committee also planned to impose a VAT on oil products but there was still no consensus on what the rate would be.

He said the committee already had a consensus on items that would not be placed under the VAT—salaried workers and agricultural products in their original state.

Meanwhile, El Shaddai leader Bro. Mike Velarde yesterday expressed support for the VAT bill, saying it would exempt the basic commodities that the poor consume.

El Shaddai's hundreds of thousands of members mostly come from the poor.

Velarde said a caucus on VAT was held by El Shaddai leaders and most of them agreed that VAT would benefit the country.

He said President Macapagal-Arroyo had explained that the additional revenues from the increased VAT would save the country from its economic woes. *With a report from Nikko Dizon*

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Doctors quote Freud to explain why facelifts should not be taxed

By Carlito Pablo

IS COSMETIC surgery "pure and simple vanity" or is it an "essential medical need?"

Manuel and Rosario Calayan, a husband-and-wife team of cosmetic surgeons, yesterday dug into psychological theory to argue that it is a medical necessity in a bid to block congressional attempts to tax cosmetic and other "body enhancement" services.

The Calayans appeared at a House ways and means committee hearing on House Bill No. 2831 seeking to impose a 10 percent value-added tax and 20-percent excise tax on a list of "non-essential" goods and services, including cosmetic surgery.

Reading from a joint statement, Rosario Calayan cited a 1930 book written by Dr. Karl Menniger entitled "The Human Mind" which explained the "theory of inferiority complex" of Sigmund Freud, the Austrian neurologist who founded psychoanalysis.

She said that from such an explanation of Freudian theory, Menniger had recommended that "(when) it is possible by means of medical, surgical, dental and other devices to correct some of the actual inferiorities, such treatment is in fact indispensable."

Rosario Calayan argued that cosmetic surgeons heal not just physical injuries but also emotional pain and give back to a "broken" individual "a renewed feeling of themselves, capable of facing the world, making them more productive and forward-looking."

The doctor said that celebrities were "just a fraction of men and women that we cater to."

She said that most of the patients they treat have a `bitter need" or "material necessity" to look better, citing as an example removing wrinkles from an old woman who needs to look younger to win back a philandering husband.

Manuel Calayan said taxing cosmetic surgery would kill an industry with enormous potential for "medical tourism," citing the success of Thailand in catering to foreigners seeking cosmetic treatment abroad.

He said Thailand treated a total of 600,000 foreigners in 2003, earning $470 million.

But the bill's author, Palawan Rep. Abraham Mitra, was unconvinced.

He said it did not follow that cosmetic surgery would help a wife win back a philandering husband as a woman's looks may not be the only reason why a husband would stray.

File complaints, CAP clients urged

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation yesterday called on plan holders of College Assurance Plan Philippines Inc. (CAP) whose checks had been dishonored to file formal complaints with the bureau to enable it to determine what charges to bring against the cash-strapped pre-need company.

"We're focusing on the matter's effects on the students," said NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco, who noted reports that some students had been unable to enroll or take their exams after checks issued by the company were rejected.

According to Wycoco, large-scale estafa was one of the possible complaints that could be filed against CAP because of the checks that bounced.

A special team from the Special Action Unit of the NBI was created to handle the case after Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez earlier ordered the bureau to investigate the problems confronting CAP.

So far, agents from the bureau's Special Action Unit have visited 21 colleges and universities in Metro Manila that rejected checks from CAP or tried but failed to cash the checks. Most of the schools were located in Manila's university belt.

Loren, Susan warn PET of 'plot'

FORMER Sen. Loren Legarda and Susan Roces, the widow of movie idol Fernando Poe Jr., have alerted the Presidential Electoral Tribunal of a plot to allegedly tamper with the ballots involved in the opposition's election protest against President Macapagal-Arroyo and Vice President Noli de Castro.

In separate motions, Roces and Legarda asked the tribunal to allow them to post watchers to guard the ballot boxes after they allegedly learned that "unscrupulous quarters" were planning to tamper with the ballot boxes and other election documents.

Legarda was the vice presidential running mate of Poe, the opposition standard-bearer in the May 10, 2004, elections which they lost to Ms Arroyo and De Castro.

Poe and Legarda filed electoral protests with the PET, claiming that they were cheated.

Roces has sought to take up her husband's electoral protest as a so-called "intervenor/substitute."

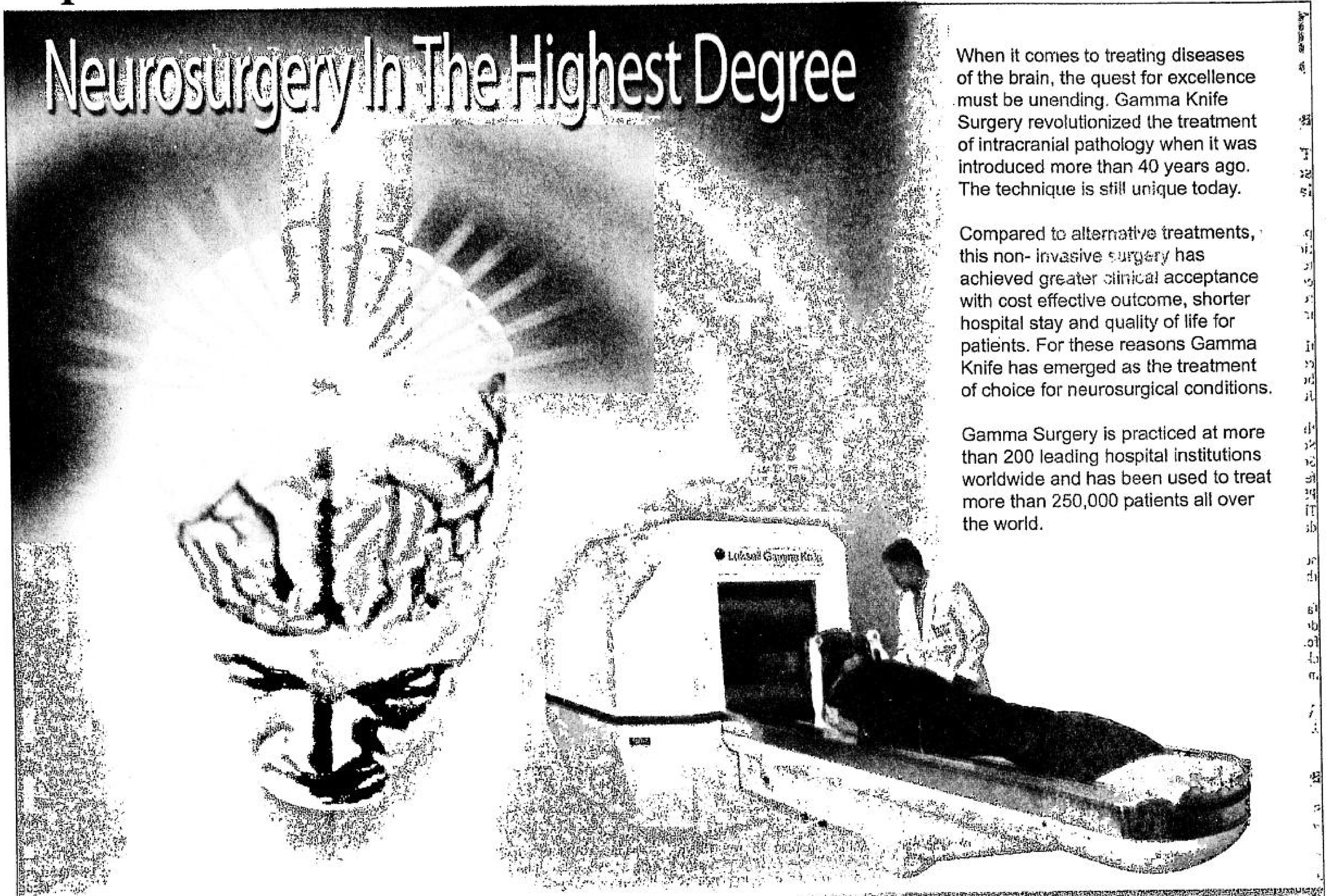
She and Legarda asked that they be allowed to post at least four watchers to safeguard the ballots, which are in the custody of Congress.

Legarda said that while the tribunal had ordered Congress to take the necessary measures to preserve and protect the integrity of the ballot boxes involved in her protest, it overlooked her motion for an ocular inspection and an inventory of the ballot boxes.

She said an ocular inspection would ensure that the ballot boxes were still intact while an inventory would determine and segregate the ballot boxes involved in her protest from those which are not.

Last Monday, De Castro asked the tribunal to reconsider this ruling and dismiss Legarda's election protest which, he said, "resonates more of propaganda, will certainly pass as a political speech but will not replace hard facts."

The high tribunal has yet to rule on Roces' petition to be allowed to substitute for her late husband. *Philip C. Tubeza*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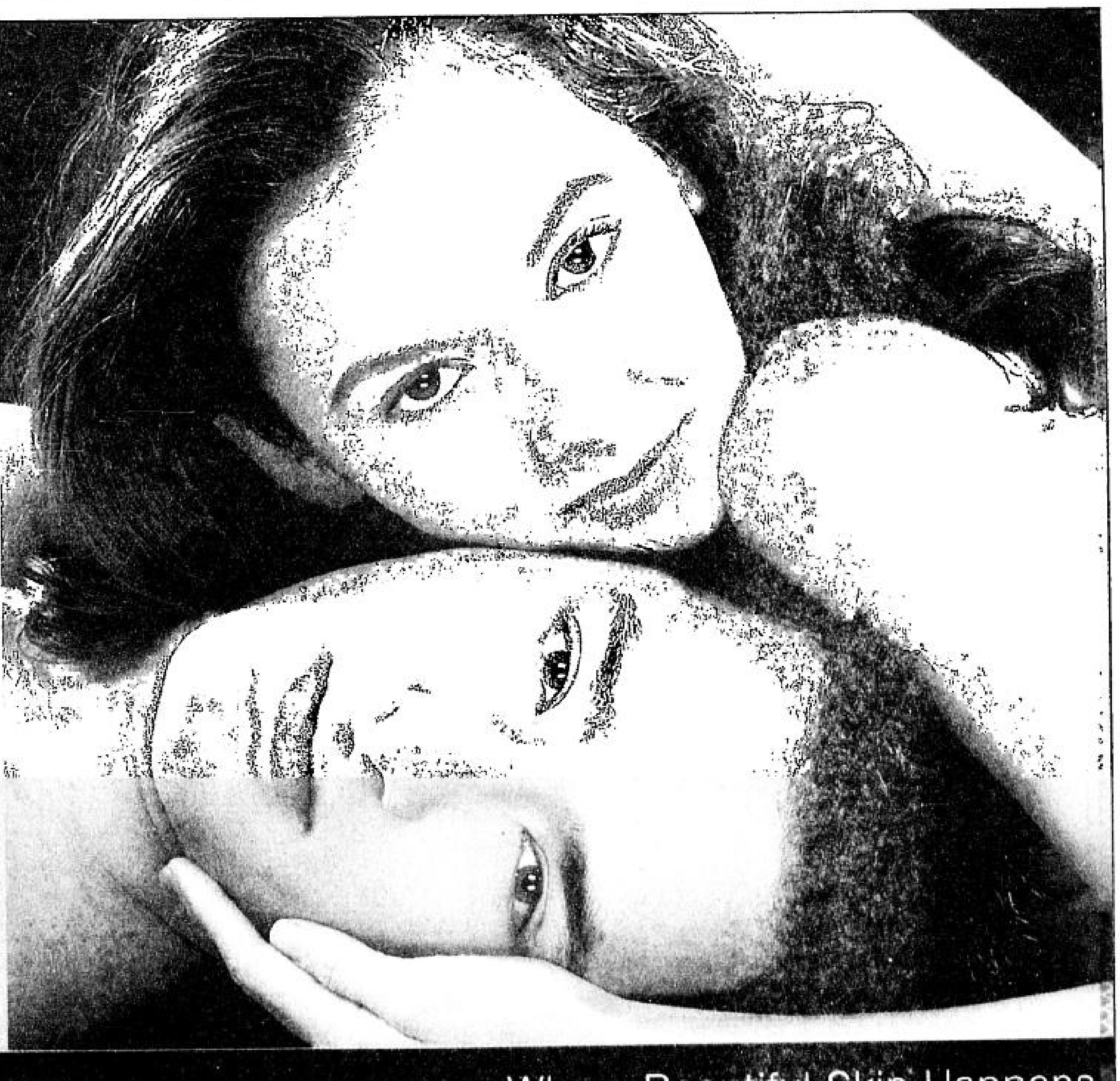
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Do you need all these men, Mikey?

From page A1

tennial Terminal, the INQUIRER learned yesterday from a well-placed source.

President Macapagal-Arroyo's eldest son, his wife Angela Montenegro, and their child Mikaela Gloria arrived at the airport from Hong Kong via Philippine Airlines' flight No. 319 shortly before 3 p.m.

"I can't see the logic why there should be so many PSG men picking up the members of the First Family," said the source, who is privy to airport security matters.

When the family left for Hong Kong on Friday, only 13 PSG men sent them off, the source said.

For the arrival of Mikey and his family, airport officials were initially informed that around six PSG men would be deployed, according to the source. Later, however, the source said, another 25 were deployed supposedly because Mikey's father was to be at the airport to welcome them home.

But as it turned out, the President's husband, Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, did not make it to the airport.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye declined to comment on the matter, saying he had yet to verify the report. The PSG did not return calls from the INQUIRER.

Except for Luli

Last December, Mike Arroyo himself arrived from abroad and requested 90 special events passes for the PSG from the Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA), the source said.

"More passes for the PSG are requested if the President herself meets her husband at the airport," he said.

Quite a number of PSG men are also deployed to the airport whenever the First Couple's youngest son Diosdado (Dato), his wife Kakai Manotok, or Mikey's wife Angela go on trips, whether international or domestic, the source said.

The First Couple's only daughter, Evangeline (Luli), is the exception, according to the source.

Level of threat

Luli, who has maintained a low-key image since her mother became President in 2001, usually has only four or five security men seeing her off, the source said.

WHAT'S it all about, Mikey?

Replying to questions from the INQUIRER on the matter, Angel Atutubo, MIAA assistant general manager for security and emergency purposes, said the number of PSG men deployed to the airport depended on the kind of engagement of the members of the First Family and the level of the threat against them.

"It is the group commander of the PSG that will decide how many [men] would be assigned when a member of the First Family leaves," said the retired brigadier general.

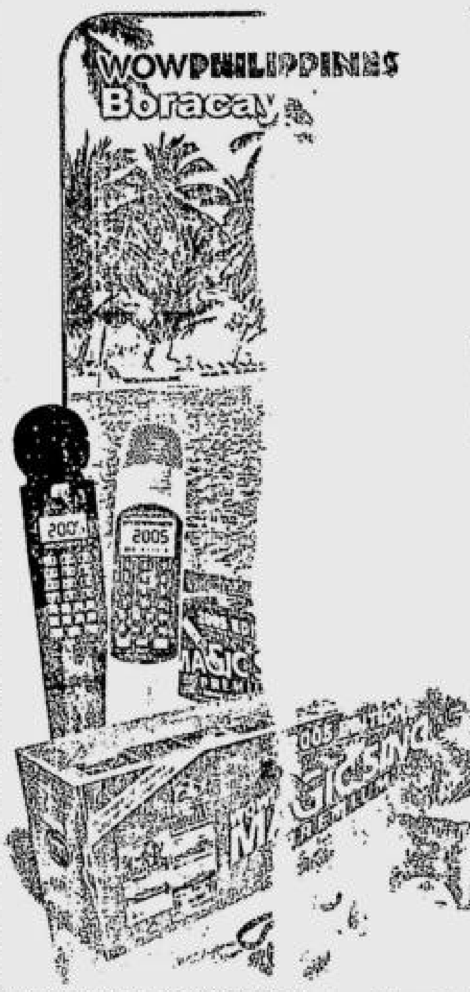
Atutubo said the numbers mentioned by the INQUIRER source could have reached that money because each member of the First Family had his or her own security men assigned to them.

"If they are all together at the airport, then there would be many PSG men there," he said.

Dictates of protocol

Protocol dictates that the President, Vice President, Chief Justice, Senate President, Speaker of the House, and heads of mission, such as a visiting Cabinet minister from another country, be exempt from security checks, Atutubo also said.

The privilege is extended to the members of the immediate family of the President and Vice President, he added.



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Let's impeach GMA, Nene tells Philconsa

From page A1

her own purposes during the presidential election last year.

- Illegal authorization of the payment of $68 million (P3.762 billion) for the purchase of six search and rescue vessels for the Coast Guard without congressional authority.
- Willful and blatant abuse of her appointing power by naming undersecretaries and assistant secretaries in excess of the number authorized by the Administrative Code.

"I suggest that Philconsa do what Leonidas told the invaders at Thermophylae some 2,500 years ago: 'Here's where we draw the line and beyond it, you shall not pass!' In fine, Philconsa, perhaps, ought to consider filing the necessary impeachment papers against the President as was implied earlier," Pimentel said.

He made the call during Philconsa's observance of Constitution Day at the Manila Polo Club in Forbes Park, Makati.

Shocked

About 200 Philconsa members and guests, including Sen. Alfredo Lim, Bulletin publisher Emilio Yap, former Interior Secretary Joey Lina and Supreme Court Justice Adolf Azcuna, applauded Pimentel after his speech.

Philconsa president Manuel Lazaro and chair Conrado Estrella refused to issue any comment.

Pimentel told the INQUIRER that the audience was "shocked."

"They thought it was just an ordinary speech. But other (Philconsa) officers say they will work on it," said the senator, stressing that Philconsa "is supposed to be the organization created to defend the Constitution."

Headline-baiting

Malacañang minced no words in rebutting Pimentel's charges but did not answer the specific charges aired by the opposition senator.

"President Arroyo's acts as mentioned were lawful, constitutional and (done) in the interest of the people and the nation," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said in a text message.

Bunye said the country needed unity, not "hate politics" because "more politics will only aggravate the economy."

"Senator Pimentel is obviously headline baiting and is not helping our people overcome the overriding problems in the economy," Bunye said.

"Nevertheless, we are ready to answer any of these charges, however absurd they may be, if the good senator would wish to push this charade through the legal mill," he said.

Philhealth

On the first charge, Pimentel said the President used some P1.4 billion in road user's tax to fund her "patently partisan political project: Kalsada Natin, Alagaan Natin" during the presidential campaign.

He said the President also authorized the transfer of some P4 billion from Owwa funds to the Philippine Health Insurance Corp. supposedly to enable the poor to gain access to public health services.

"While the objectives might have been good, it was still wrong for the President to have done so. The reason is that the road user's fund and the Owwa fund are trust funds," Pimentel said. "The funds, therefore, cannot be used for any purpose other than that specified in the law that created them."

He said the Constitution mandated that "All mo(nies) collected on any tax levied for a special purpose shall be treated as a special fund and paid out for such purpose."

Pimentel said that by misusing the trust funds of the road user's law and the Owwa, at the very least, "she betrayed the public trust for which she should be made answerable."

On the second charge, Pimentel said the President gave "full powers" on July 30, 2001 to then Transportation Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez to negotiate in behalf of the Republic an agreement on a $71.14-million loan for the acquisition of six vessels.

The President then ordered the release of special allotment release orders on various occasions to cover the cost ($68.4 million or some P3.762 billion) of acquiring the six vessels for the Coast Guard.

Pimentel believed it was wrong of the President to have done so, citing Article VI, Section 29 (1) of the Constitution, which provides that no money shall be paid out of the treasury except when appropriated by law.

"By illegally authorizing the payment of the vessels in question without any congressional appropriation, the President culpably violated the Constitution for which she is answerable," the senator said.

Power to appoint not absolute

On the third charge, Pimentel said the President abused her power of appointment by appointing undersecretaries and assistant secretaries in excess of the number authorized by the Administrative Code of 1987.

"While the power of the President to fill up offices created by law is acknowledged, the presidential power to appoint is circumscribed by applicable laws. In other words, the power to appoint is not absolute. It is limited not only by the constitutional requirement as to qualifications but also by law as to the number of offices that must be filled up," he said.

Citing an example, Pimentel said the President appointed six undersecretaries and six assistant secretaries to the defense department although the Administrative Code provided for only one undersecretary and five commissioners—one commissioner and four associate commissioners—to the Bureau of Immigration and Deportation even as Republic Act No. 613, as amended, provided only three.

Ms Arroyo also "abused her appointing power" by appointing Luis Lorenzo chair of Land Bank of the Philippines, violating its corporate charter which says that the secretary of finance should be the ex-officio chair of the bank.

The senator also questioned the appointment of Lorenzo as chair of Quedancorp, "which is contrary to the law which provides that the secretary of agriculture should be the chair of the corporate entity."

Pimentel said the illegal implications of the President's abuse of her appointing power were: the persons, thus appointed, illegally exercised powers and made decisions that may affect the rights and obligations of the people dealing with them; and illegally collected salaries, perks and per diems that are attached to those offices.

Pimentel said he could not imagine that the President was unaware of the serious implications of her "culpable transgressions of the Constitution and the rule of law," pointing out that although she was not a lawyer, she had a good legal team in Malacañang. *With a report from Juliet Labog-Javellana*

LAST acts in office of outgoing Energy Secretary Vince Perez include witnessing alongside President Arroyo the signing on Tuesday of a Memorandum of Understanding between the DENR and the Headwaters Technology Innovation Group. The latter is to infuse $2.2B into a coal conversion facility in the country. *(Story on Page B12.)*

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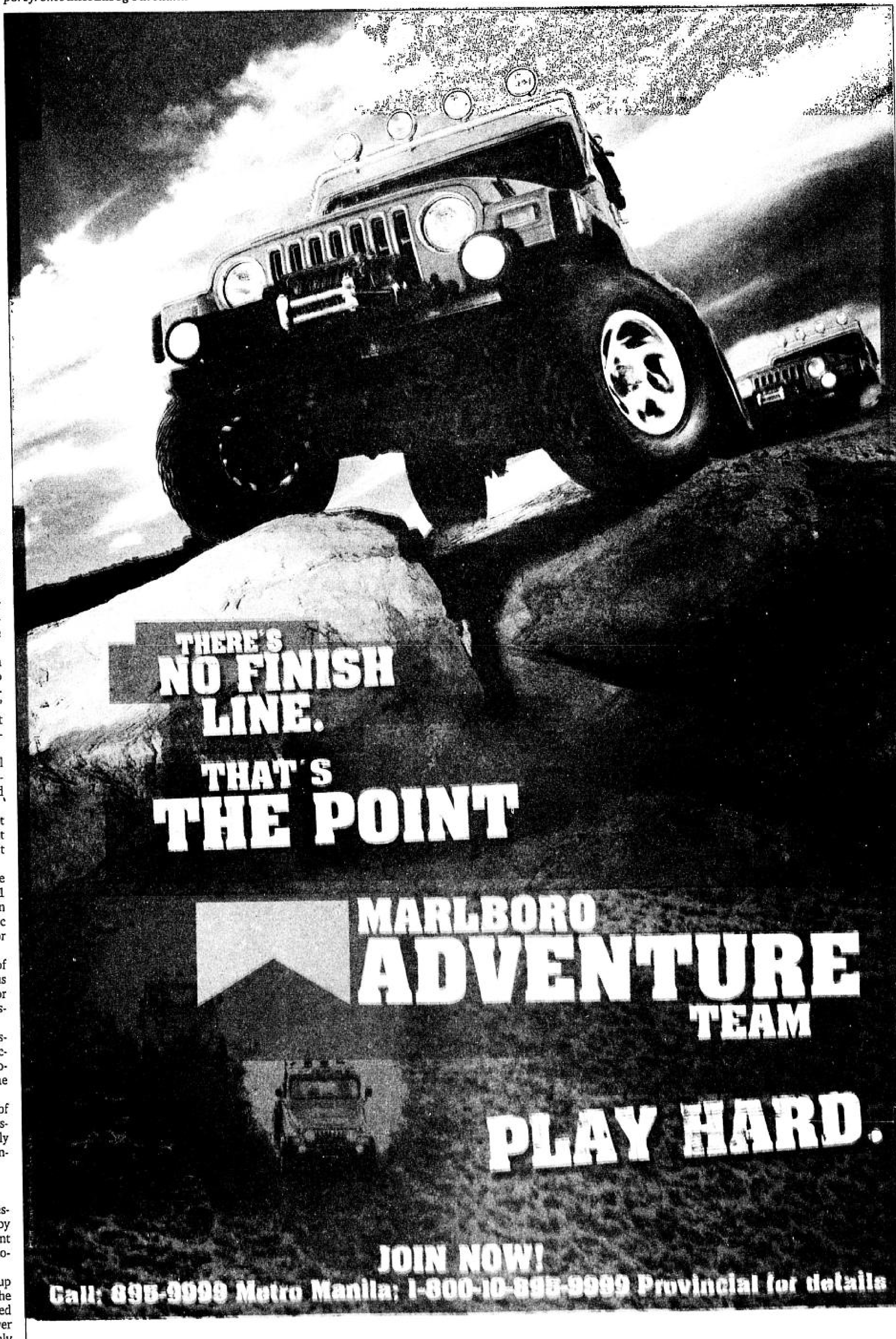

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Erap back in hospital; pneumonia, says doc

From page A1

JINGGOY ESTRADA: This is an emergency, there's no need to ask the court's permission.

even his mother, are located there.

Estrada had been running a fever for three days, according to Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, his eldest son and co-respondent in the plunder case.

The senator said the relatively cold weather at the Estradas' 15-hectare resort in Tanay could have caused the fever.

He said his father was reluctant to go to the hospital but that the family had insisted.

Asked whether his father had secured a clearance from the Sandiganbayan, the senator replied: "This is an emergency. There are no [medical] facilities in Tanay. We cannot say yet how long he will have to stay in hospital. It all depends on the doctors. Anyway, we have informed the sheriff. But this has nothing to do with his knees."

Contacted by reporters, Sandiganbayan chief Sheriff Ed Urieta said no court procedures were violated when the 67-year-old ex-President was moved from Tanay to San Juan.

"Everything was coordinated," he said, confirming that he was apprised of Estrada's situation prior to the transfer.

Urieta also said he went to the Cardinal Santos Memorial Hospital to check on the ousted leader's condition preparatory to submitting a "report" to the justices of the special division hearing his plunder case.

Lung infection

Another of Estrada's sons, San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito, confirmed his father's condition.

"He has pneumonia [and his] right lung is infected," Ejercito said in a text message. "He is confined on doctor's orders [and will stay in the hospital for] around three days."

But this should be no cause for alarm, Ejercito said, adding: "It's just a checkup."

Hocson said Estrada was coughing earlier yesterday and complaining of feeling pain all over his body.

He said this was why he had ordered an X-ray test for his patient.

Estrada is under the care of Dr. Cecil Tady, head of the hospital's pulmonary medicine division, according to Ferdie Ramos, one of the ex-President's media handlers.

No special treatment

In Malacañang, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye denied that Estrada was being given special treatment.

Bunye said Estrada's being taken to hospital was "a normal response to a medical emergency."

"He should be given medical treatment," Bunye said.

Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio said state prosecutors saw nothing wrong with the development. But he said Estrada's lawyers should eventually submit a formal motion informing the Sandiganbayan about it.

No problem

"It's OK with us if it's an emergency. If it is a reason of health, then we have no problem with that. For as long as he is going to seek treatment in a hospital, it's OK with us," Villa-Ignacio said.

Before Estrada was transferred to Tanay last year, he was detained at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center in Quezon City. *With reports from Luige A. del Puerto and Gil Cabacungan Jr.*

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RP calls on 'Yard' to solve Pinoy's murder

THE GOVERNMENT has asked Scotland Yard to get to the bottom of the killing of a Filipino ship captain aboard a British-owned motor tanker and identify his killers among the Filipino crewmen.

Foreign Secretary Alberto G. Romulo instructed the Philippine Embassy in London to coordinate with Scotland Yard and British maritime authorities to establish the circumstances behind the slaying of Capt. Walfredo Banta.

Undisclosed

Since the case is under inquest, the circumstances of the crime have not been disclosed by the local police, officials said.

"We're seeking assistance from Scotland Yard. We're asking them to thoroughly investigate the case so the killers could be identified," Jose S. Brillantes, undersecretary for migrant workers' affairs, told reporters.

Attacked

Banta died from injuries he sustained when he was attacked by an "undetermined number" of men while the M/T Overseas Josefa Camejo was traveling from Venezuela to Sweden on the night of Feb. 3, the officials said.

"Despite medical attention immediately administered by trained crew members and by an emergency medical team dispatched to the vessel, Captain Banta's injuries proved fatal," said Department of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Gilberto Asuque.

The vessel was four miles off the English coast when the incident happened.

All-Filipino

The tanker, manned by an all-Filipino crew and set of officers, is docked at the port of Brixham in the United Kingdom, where the case has been endorsed to the British authorities, according to Asuque.

Banta's wife, Mylene, flew to the UK over the weekend. His brother, Gualberto, was to follow her yesterday.

"We're asking the manning agencies to allow the relatives to fly to London and to arrange for everything in case charges are to be filed [against the perpetrators]," Brillantes said. *TJ Burgonio*

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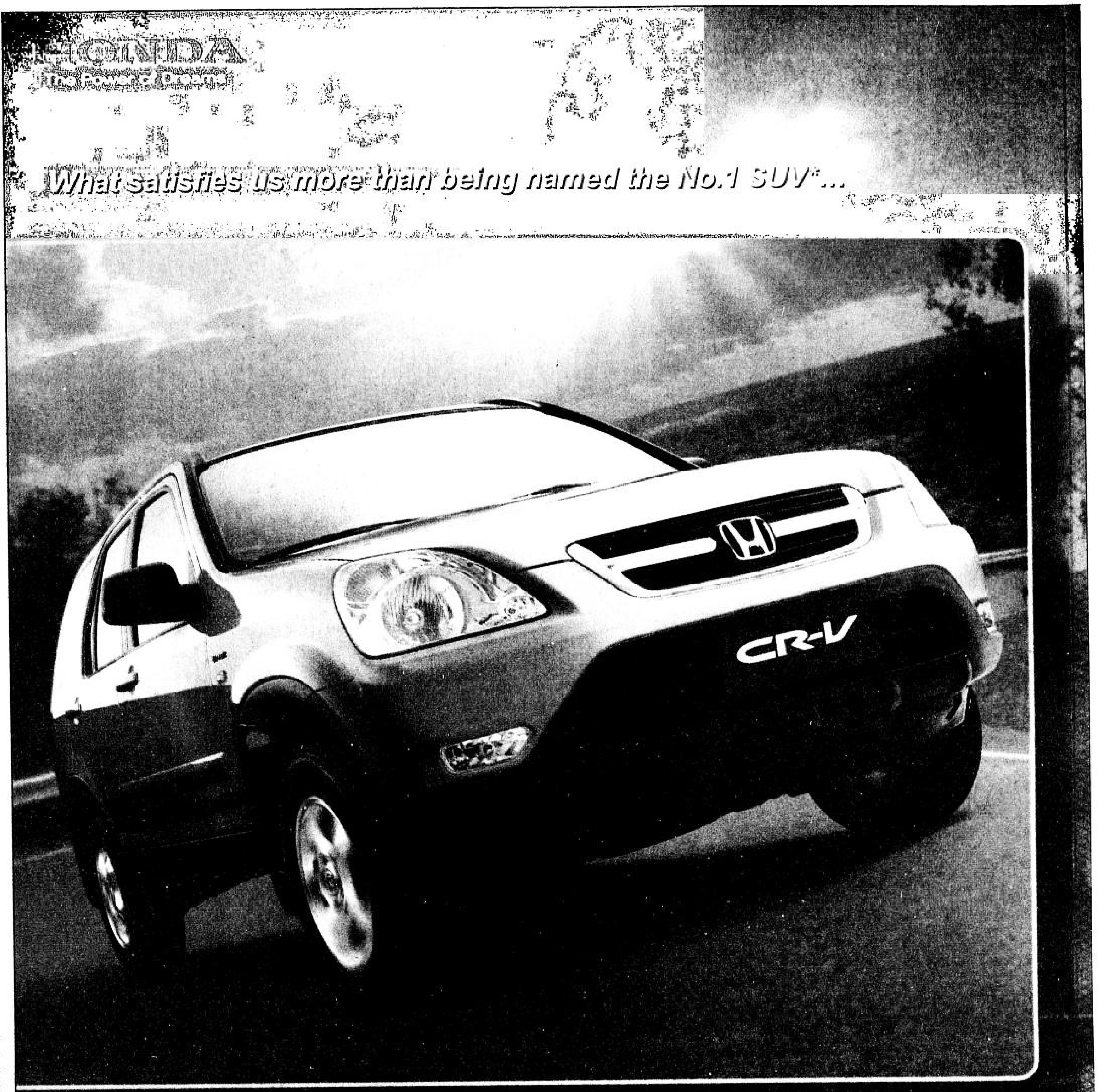

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Unfazed by threats, GMA cancels Diwalwal visit anyway

By Gil Cabacungan Jr. and Volt Contreras

MALACAÑANG is brushing off communist insurgents' threats to attack foreign mining companies that would dare dig for precious metals in their territory.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, however, wasn't taking any chances. She canceled her planned visit to Mt. Diwalwal, a gold-rich region with a history of uncontrolled violence.

"The [foreign mining firms] are coming in [knowing] the circumstances and environment and we have not seen any loss of interest on the part of mining companies," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye in a briefing.

Communist Party of the Philippines spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal earlier told radio dzBB: "We will not allow mining companies to operate inside guerrilla fronts. If they insist on the wanton destruction of the environment, our forces are sure to launch all available means to paralyze their operations and force them out of the guerrilla zones."

Bunye said the government was only promoting sustainable mining and that it wanted to exploit the country's resources for good economic use.

"Like other Filipinos, we are also concerned about the environment. We're also concerned about the proper treatment of indigenous people, in the just and equitable share of local governments in the proceeds of the utilization of natural resources. We see nothing wrong in pushing for sustainable mining," he said.

Bunye, however, admitted that the President canceled her visit to one of the country's most promising mine sites because of the threat. "That is definitely connected. I guess that you will understand why this has to be postponed."

Environment Secretary Michael Defensor yesterday downplayed the impact of the latest threat issued by the New People's Army, saying he had yet to hear foreign mining companies express anxiety over the NPA presence in the countryside.

Police budget gets Senate ax

MISSING funds and too many undersecretaries.

Two days before the Senate is set to pass the 2005 General Appropriations Act, senators continue to cut, trim and reallocate the budgets of line departments.

First to get the ax during plenary deliberations Monday night was the Philippine National Police (PNP) in connection with the P231 million earmarked for police training in 2003.

The PNP's top brass present during the deliberations feigned ignorance over the existence of the fund, saying they did not know that such an amount existed, much less how it was disbursed.

Sen. Sergio Osmeña III pointed out that it was released by the budget department to PNP's training officials in the same year.

Villar said P231 million was "too big for training."

"We will investigate that [even after the budget is passed] because it seems anomalous. We were not able to get to the bottom of the matter because the person in charge of police training was not present," Villar said.

The PNP wants a P35.2-billion budget this year, which makes up the bulk of the P43.6-billion budget of the Department of Interior and Local Government.

Villar was also stunned to learn that the number of Cabinet undersecretaries and ambassadors had reached an "alarming rate."

He said both administration and opposition senators agreed to cut the number of Cabinet Usecs and members of diplomatic missions abroad. *Michael Lim Ubac*

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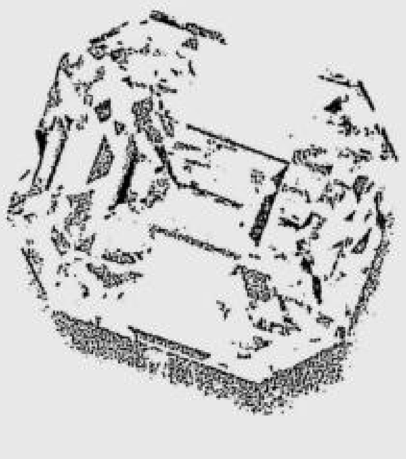

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US Pacific Command chief here to talk security with GMA

ADMIRAL Thomas Fargo, commander of the United States Pacific Command (Pacom), meets today with President Macapagal-Arroyo and senior Philippine officials to discuss RP-US military-to-military security cooperation activities, including Philippine defense reform and enhancing the country's capacity to counter terrorism.

Fargo's visit is his fifth to the Philippines as Pacom commander. He assumed the post in May 2002. The visit is part of a routine swing through the region which includes a stop in Japan.

In December 2004, Defense Secretary Avelino J. Cruz Jr. and senior Filipino defense officials visited US Pacific Command in Honolulu, Hawaii, to meet with Fargo and review programs for the war on terrorism and reform initiatives.

Fargo's visit is an opportunity to affirm the strength of the RP-US alliance and to emphasize the value of the Philippines' continued support of Operation Enduring Freedom and the global war on terrorism, a US Embassy news release said yesterday.

Tsunami aid meet set in RP

THE ASIAN Development Bank will host a high-level meeting in Manila next month to coordinate international aid to tsunami-affected countries, ADB president Haruhiko Kuroda announced Tuesday.

Kuroda told reporters the meeting will "take stock of recovery achievements and pledges of support" and to reach a "common understanding" of the major considerations in the delivery of rehabilitation and reconstruction programs to the affected countries over the next four to five years.

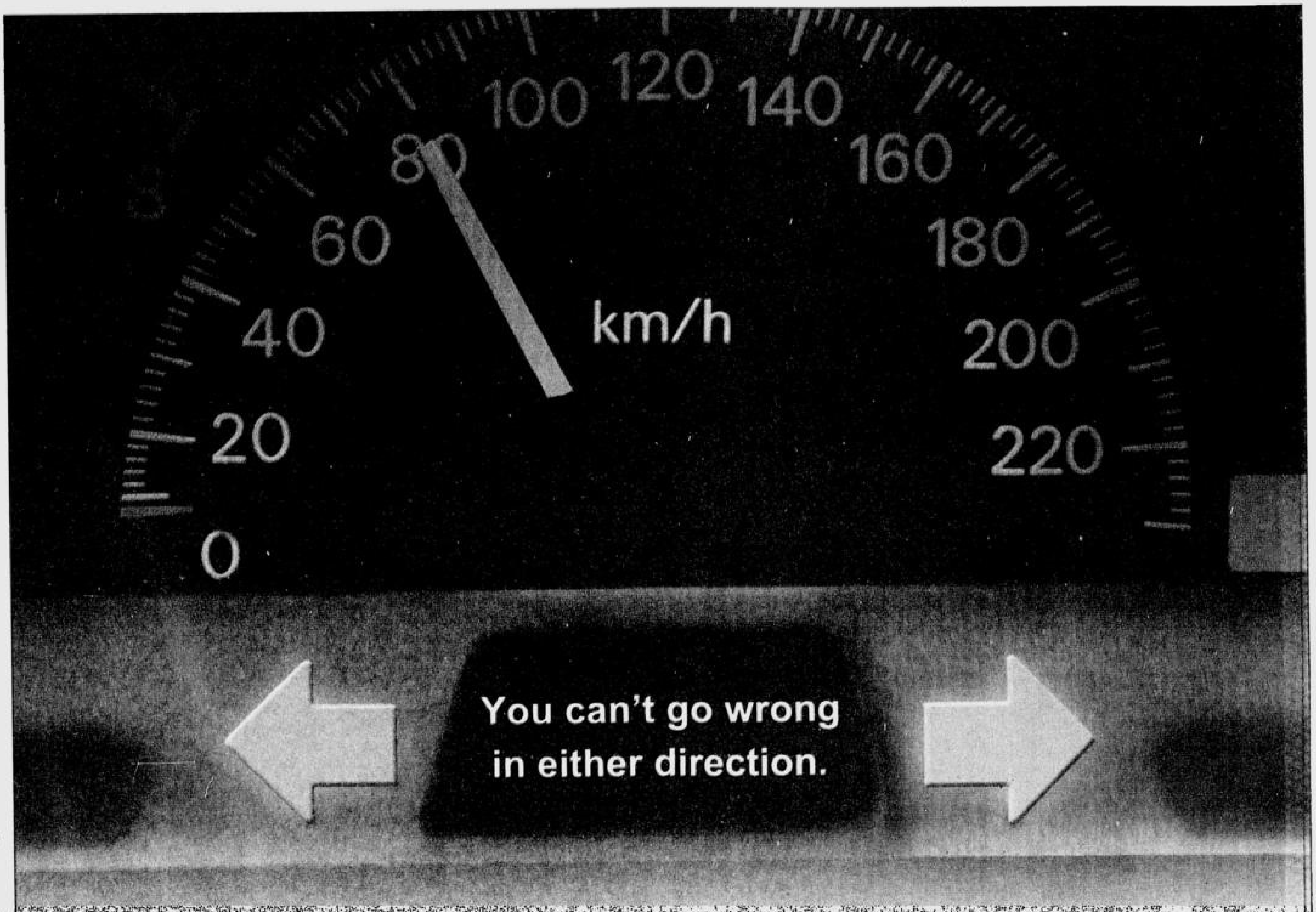
"The meeting will help ensure that the world's attention remains focused on tsunami support and that donor support for, and confidence in, the affected countries remain high," he said.

He said he will invite ministers from tsunami-affected countries and donor nations, plus representatives from the United Nations, the World Bank and other multilateral institutions to the March 18 meeting in Manila.

Kuroda noted that response to the disaster was shifting from relief to rehabilitation and reconstruction.

He said the ADB and the World Bank were conducting an assessment of the needs of the affected countries and a report would be finished before the meeting.

The Manila-based bank has identified $600 million in readily available funds for affected countries and another $175 million in reprogrammed funding for Indonesia, the Maldives, Sri Lanka and India, Kuroda said. *AP*



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MITSUBISHI MOTORS

Gays urge gov't to allow same-sex unions

A GAY rights group on Tuesday urged the government to follow the lead of communist rebels by recognizing homosexual unions.

Military spokespersons, however, mocked the communist New People's Army (NPA) saying their recently announced recognition of same-sex unions was a publicity stunt and showed how isolated they were from the largely conservative Catholic population of the country.

The INQUIRER on Monday carried pictures of a ground-breaking marriage ceremony between two male NPA guerrillas, who marched to a jungle altar under a canopy of assault rifles.

Pro-Gay, a leftist homosexual rights group, praised the rebels in a statement, saying they were "one with movements elsewhere in advancing gay rights."

They challenged the devoutly Catholic President Macapagal-Arroyo to "enact laws and policies that would formalize the equal citizenship of gay and lesbian Filipinos.

"Instead of branding homosexual marriages as immoral, the government should be taking steps to follow the example of the NPA by legalizing domestic partnerships and honoring gay families."

Army spokesperson Maj. Bartolome Bacarro shrugged off the communists' ceremony, saying, "This is part of propaganda to entice gays to join the NPA. But I know gays are wise enough and look beyond this (propaganda)," Bacarro said.

Military spokesperson Lt. Col. Buenaventura Pascual was more dismissive, saying the marriage "proves the NPA have no religion."

The NPA has been waging a Maoist-inspired campaign for more than three decades that has claimed thousands of lives.

The group says it sanctions marriages in areas where it operates. NPA guerrillas usually require permission from their superiors to get married. *AFP*

WOMAN PRESIDENTS

After almost 100 years, the University of the Philippines finally has a woman president. President Macapagal-Arroyo swears in former UP Diliman Chancellor Emerlinda Roman at Malacañang. EDWIN BACASMAS

From GMA with love, and ₱1,000, on Valentine's Day

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo will show her love for 1.4 million government employees on Valentine's Day by giving each one a cash gift of at least P1,000—enough to buy dinner for two in a modest restaurant.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said the employees could get a bigger "Valentine bonus" on Feb. 14 depending on the Department of Budget and Management's final computation on how much the government saved from Ms Arroyo's austerity measures last year.

The President decided to distribute the productivity enhancement pay evenly among the bureaucracy to reward the successful compliance to her belt-tightening measures ranging from cutbacks in electricity and fuel consumption to cancellations of foreign trips, seminars and parties to control the budget deficit.

Bunye said in a radio interview that the DBM had initially projected savings of at least P3 billion, but the amount could be higher as some departments had yet to submit their final reports.

"It's anywhere from P1,000 to P2,000; we will decide after all the reports have been consolidated," he said.

The savings contributed significantly in reducing last year's budget deficit to P168.1 billion from the P197.8-billion target.

Government stressed that the bonus was a one-time gift on top of the normal Christmas bonus and 13th-month pay and would be granted only if more savings were generated this year.

While the government is generous in giving out gifts for Valentine's, it is prudent when it comes to granting government employees their long-desired salary increases, it was noted.

18 death row convicts get 90-day lease on life

EIGHTEEN inmates facing the death penalty were granted a 90-day reprieve last month by President Macapagal-Arroyo, according to Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez yesterday.

Gonzalez said the President ordered the reprieves on Jan. 25, thereby moving the dates of execution of the convicts to May.

The reprieves give lawyers for the convicts more time to review their cases, with the possibility that the cases may be returned to court and the death sentences commuted.

Ms Arroyo earlier imposed a moratorium on state executions due to pressure from the influential Catholic Church. However, she later changed her mind and said that kidnappers and drug dealers would be executed after strong lobbying from the Chinese-Filipino community.

However, no one has yet been executed under her term.

"Granting reprieves and commutations is an absolute power of the President. The Constitution gives her that authority. She does not need to give an explanation," Gonzalez said.

Gonzalez, however, did not reveal the crimes the convicts were sentenced for.

Gonzalez said the President could again grant them reprieves before their execution dates are due. *Philip C. Tubeza, with a report from AFP*

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Israel, Palestine agree to end violence

SHARM EL-SHEIKH, Egypt—Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Palestinian leader Mahmud Abbas announced the end of four years of violence at a landmark summit in Egypt Tuesday, setting the stage for a full-scale revival of the peace process.

"We have agreed with the prime minister to cease all acts of violence against Israelis and against Palestinians wherever they are," said Abbas at the summit in the Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh.

Sharon said the Palestinians had agreed to end anti-Israeli actions and that in parallel, "Israel will cease its military operations against the Palestinians in all areas."

"We have an opportunity to turn our back on the bloody path imposed on us over the last four years," added Sharon, expressing hope that the summit would mark the day when the peace process was relaunched.

The summit, the first between Israeli and Palestinian leaders for over four years, comes amid a growing rapprochement after the moderate Abbas' election a month ago and a new commitment by the United States to seek Middle East peace.

The pair met for the first encounter between Israeli and Palestinian leaders for over four years after Sharon held his first-ever meeting with the summit host, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

"The calm that is currently prevailing in our territories signals the start of a new era, the start of a hopeful peace," Abbas added.

"What we have announced today is the implementation of the first phase of the roadmap ... and an essential step to give us a chance to put the peace process back on track."

Sharon warned, however, that it was a "fragile opportunity" for peace, warning that there were "extremists" waiting to derail the process.

A number of truces had been agreed upon between Israel and Palestine since the intifada erupted but all collapsed within weeks.

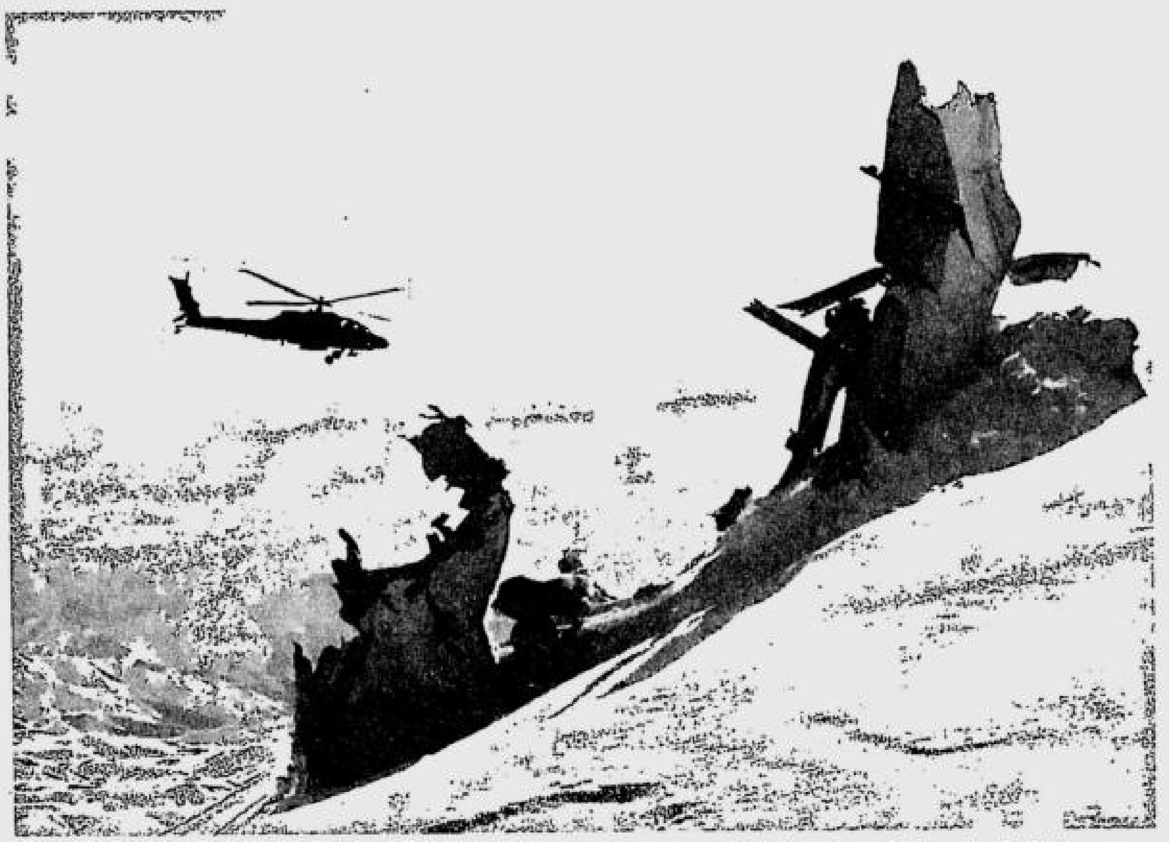
Along with Mubarak and King Abdullah II of Jordan, who was also attending, the leaders faced each other over a large round table, giving their declarations in turn and flanked by their respective delegations. Abdullah did not speak.

Mubarak hailed what he said was a "positive spirit" between Israel and the Palestinians and said he hoped it would lead to an "honest and serious" implementation of the roadmap peace plan.

"They have met to work together with determination to turn the page on difficult years during which innocent people were killed, blood was shed and destruction prevailed.

"We are meeting here to put an end to this cycle (of violence), to put things back in order and to put the wheel of peace on the right track. The task is very great, but our hopes are greater."

Sharon also confirmed that Israel would release hundreds of Palestinian prisoners. *AFP*



A DUTCH Apache helicopter hovers over the debris of the crashed Afghan Kam Air Boeing 737 lying on the snowy mountain of Chaperi, 30 km southeast of Kabul, Afghanistan, on Monday. AP

Snow thwarts plans to retrieve bodies from wreckage of crashed Afghan jet

BUT KHAK, Afghanistan—Fresh snow dimmed hopes on Tuesday that troops could retrieve the first bodies from the wreckage of an Afghan jetliner which crashed into a freezing mountaintop last week with the apparent loss of all 104 people on board.

Nato soldiers on Monday found human remains but no survivors at the crash site 30 km east of Kabul and plans were laid to fly Afghan medical teams and investigators to the scene to begin the gruesome task of collecting body parts.

But an Afghan army spokesperson said troops who tried to camp near the site had been forced to descend by the freezing temperatures, while heavy cloud cover was keeping helicopters on the ground.

"They'll try to go back up on foot today, but the best chance is from the air," spokesperson Maj. Mohammed Arif Anes said. "We need God's help."

The Boeing 737-200, flown by Kam Air, Afghanistan's first post-Taliban private airline, vanished last Thursday after it approached Kabul airport in a snowstorm from the western city of Herat.

Officials expect all 96 passengers and eight crew—most of them Afghans, but also including more than 20 foreigners—perished in what would be Afghanistan's worst aviation disaster. AP

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Asian quake, tsunami moved islands, shortened days

JAKARTA—The massive earthquake that triggered the Asian tsunami wobbled the earth on its axis, forced cartographers back to the drawing board and changed time by a fraction, but there's no need to adjust your clocks.

Six weeks after the tsunami that may have killed 300,000 people on the shores of the Indian Ocean, scientists are discovering more about the changes wrought by the magnitude 9 quake, the fourth-largest in the last century.

It caused upheaval on the sea floor near its epicenter off the northwest coast of Indonesia's Sumatra island and moved several other islands, but scientists say any movement of land mass can be measured in centimeters rather than tens of meters.

Chen Ji, a seismologist at the California Institute of Technology, said he found movement along the fault line of about 10 meters laterally and four or five meters vertically.

But reports that the entire island of Sumatra—1,700 km long and 400 km wide—moved 35 meters or more are wildly inaccurate, scientists say.

"We know we have movements of over a meter, perhaps a couple of meters," said Ken Hudnut, a California-based geophysicist with the US Geological Survey. "But the idea that Sumatra has moved 100 feet is just wrong."

Scientists are working on precise measurements by comparing geographic points whose locations were known before the quake with their new positions using the Global Positioning System, which reads exact locations by satellite.

High-tech British and US ships are investigating changes to the seabed and local authorities are measuring depths in critical shipping channels.

Scientists at Nasa, the US space agency, said the Dec. 26 quake—the largest to rattle Earth since 1964 in Alaska—disrupted the planet's rotation and shaved 2.68 microseconds, or millionths of a second, from the length of a day.

Nasa scientists B. F. Chao and Richard Gross calculated it shifted Earth's mean north pole about 2.5 cm and made the planet slightly less oblate, or flattened at the poles.

"Physically, this is analogous to a spinning skater drawing arms closer to the body, resulting in a faster spin," they wrote in an article in Eos, a publication of the American Geophysical Union.

But they said these changes are based on calculations rather than measurements. The changes are so small they are either difficult to measure or too small to detect.

Many earthquakes shake the planet's axis and affect its rotation, scientists added, but their impact is too small to measure.

But environmental damage from the tsunami was vast. The killer waves gouged beaches, crushed coral reefs, smashed thousands of hectares of mangrove forests and refashioned coastlines from Thailand to Somalia.

A preliminary survey by Indonesia's government and the United Nations Environmental Program (Unep) estimated the economic cost to the environment at $675 million in Indonesia alone.

The survey said 25,000 hectares of mangroves and 29,000 hectares coral reefs were damaged.

Some coral reefs—undersea gardens that act as shelter and nursery to a wide range of marine species—were crushed by the waves. Corals grow slowly, some only a few centimeters a year, so their recovery could take decades.

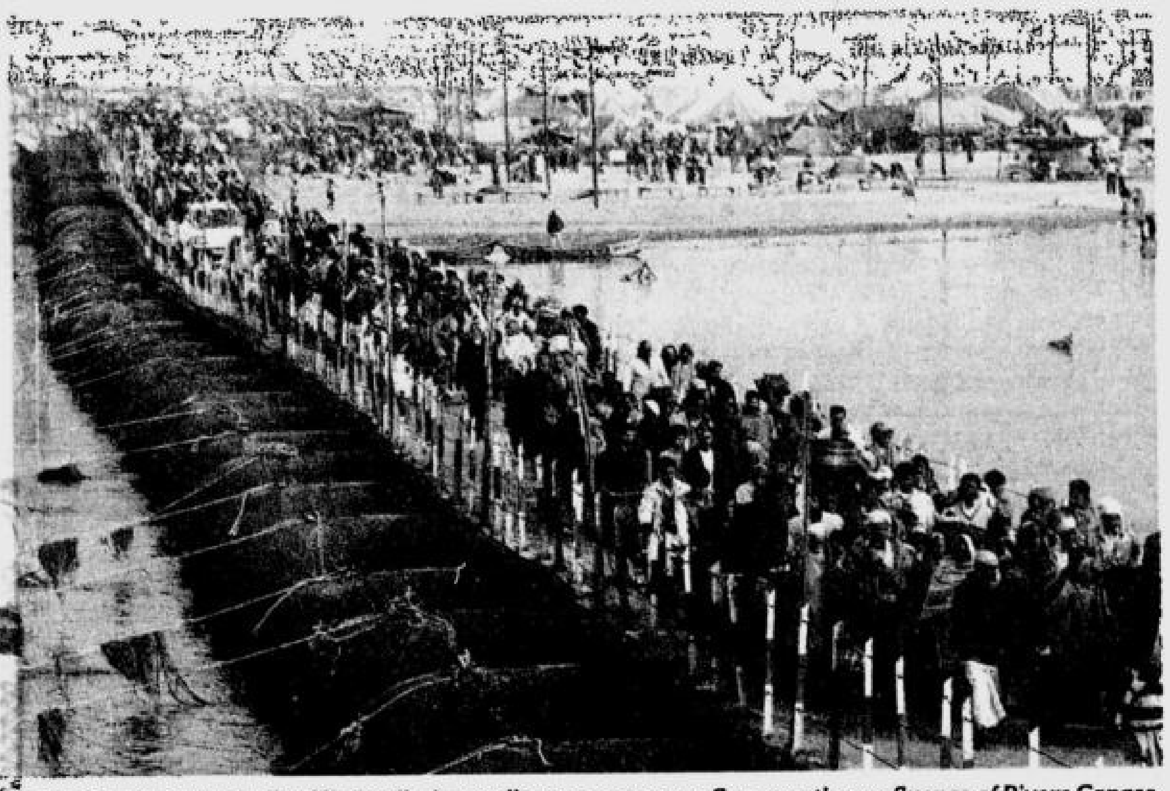
John Pernetta, a Unep official in Bangkok, said the extent of damage to some of the coral reefs around Thailand was very high—up to 80 percent in some places. Their recovery was uncertain.

Mangroves torn out by the waves will fare better, he said, as they leave behind roots and seeds that will help them regenerate.

"Long-term damage to mangroves by hurricanes or tsunamis doesn't really happen," Pernetta said. "After five to 10 years you don't even know anything has happened."

Vast stretches of Sumatra's west coast were turned brown by the tsunami as rice paddies and other vegetation were swamped by salt water. It could take two or three rainy seasons to wash the salt from the saturated land, experts say.

The tsunami waves ate away beaches and coastal areas in Thailand, Indonesia and Sri Lanka, radically changing maps. *Reuters*



RELIGIOUS BATH: Indian Hindu pilgrims walk on a pontoon on Sangam, the confluence of Rivers Ganges and Yamuna, during the annual traditional fair of Magh Mela in Allahabad, India. Hundreds of thousands of Hindu pilgrims take dips during the Magh Mela, some hoping to wash away sins and others to secure a fine spouse, in a sun-worshipping tradition older than Hinduism itself. AP

Pope's illness raises question of resignation

VATICAN CITY—With Pope John Paul II likely to spend several more days in hospital following a serious respiratory infection, the question has again arisen whether the ailing Pontiff will resign.

The Vatican's senior official, Secretary of State Cardinal Angelo Sodano, left the question hanging in the air Monday night when journalists asked him whether the Pope intended to step down.

"Let's leave that to the Pope's conscience," Sodano said.

Papal resignation is allowed by church law, but almost all popes have stayed in office until death. In the past there was always the concern that a resigned pope could set up an alternative center of power or create a scission, and church law has no provision for removing a pope against his will.

In fact, the last papal resignation dates back to 1418, when the council of Constance deposed two anti-popes who were claiming the papal throne and accepted the decision of Gregory XII to step down in order to end a series of schisms between rival clans of cardinals.

John Paul made it clear from his hospital bed on Sunday that he was not thinking of leaving. In a speech read on his behalf by an archbishop, he said he was continuing "to serve the Church and the whole of humanity" even from his hospital bed.

John Paul's condition was steadily improving, according to Vatican spokesperson Joaquin Navarro Valls, and no further bulletin on his health would be issued until noon Thursday.

He said the Pontiff was eating regularly, sitting in an armchair to read his breviary—the book all priests read daily—and celebrating Mass for members of his medical team.

He was receiving "hundreds if not thousands of very touching messages from around the world," Navarro-Valls said.

However, the Pope's inability to speak the words of the benediction led several newspaper editorialists to ask how incapacitated a pope could be and still continue to reign. In particular, could there be a speechless pope, unable to recite the key words of the Mass, a canonization or the consecration of a bishop?

Argentine Cardinal Jorge Medina said then the Pope might consider stepping down if his speech difficulty worsened to the point where he was unable to celebrate the Mass. But other prelates have been quick to deny this.

Cardinal Mario Francesco Pompedda, an expert in church law, played down the voice problem.

He told the Rome newspaper Il Messaggero that there was no cause for concern as long as the Pope remained lucid.

"The question would be serious if his incapacity of words was accompanied by an incapacity to think," Pompedda said. "But with the strength and intention with which the Pope speaks, that is not the case."

Cardinal Sodano said he hoped John Paul II could continue to reign for many years to come.

"We must have full confidence in him. He knows what has to be done," the cardinal said. "Pius IX was pope for 32 years. Let's hope that John Paul II can surpass this line."

"We are praying at this time for a long life and for the serenity of the Holy Father," said Sodano, who runs the day-to-day administration of the Holy See.

The question of resignation was widely discussed in 2000 when the Pope turned 80, the age at which cardinals are no longer allowed to vote in a papal election.

The Pope was already seriously affected by Parkinson's disease, and French Cardinal Jean-Marie Lustiger described him as a "prisoner in his body."

The Pope said on his 75th birthday that he had abandoned himself to Christ, and left to Him the decision on how and when he would be relieved of his service. *AFP*

Suicide bomber kills 13 in Iraq

BAGHDAD—A suicide bomber killed at least 13 people in an attack at an Iraqi army recruitment center in Baghdad on Tuesday, US army and hospital officials said, in the latest attack on the country's fledgling security forces.

The blast came a day after suicide bombers killed 27 people in attacks in two Iraqi cities—the worst bloodshed since the country's landmark election nine days ago.

Police said the attacker's target was a truck carrying recruits into the base, housed in a disused airport. The US military said the bomber was believed to have been on foot.

A plume of black smoke rose into the sky above the recruitment center and ambulances raced to the scene. Hospital officials said all the victims appeared to be young men.

Guerrillas have frequently attacked Iraqis queuing up to join the police and army. Most of those killed in Monday's blasts in the cities of Mosul and Baquba were either policemen or civilians looking for work with the police.

Al-Qaida's wing in Iraq, led by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, claimed responsibility for those blasts and vowed further attacks on "apostates and their masters," an apparent reference to US-led forces and the Iraqis who work with them.

Iraq's security forces have borne the brunt of attacks by insurgents. The US military is trying to train them to be a fighting force capable of defeating the militants but says it needs more time. The Americans have also said local police forces are the weakest link in Iraq's security network.

US officials say Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld will lobby Nato allies at a meeting in France this week to provide more money to help train Iraqi security forces.

Nato countries have sent 84 military officers to Iraq to help in the training process but the United States is pushing to increase the number to around 300.

Elsewhere in Baghdad, police said a bomb outside a popular restaurant killed one Iraqi and gunmen ambushed the convoy of an Iraqi politician, killing two of his sons.

The politician, Mithal al-Alusi, who has been a vocal critic of Syria and Iran and was widely criticized in Iraq for visiting Israel last year, survived the attack.

Three Iraqi soldiers and two insurgents were killed in a firefight on a road leading south from Baghdad to the city of Hilla, the Iraqi army said. Eighteen insurgents were arrested.

There was no further word on the fate of an Italian journalist kidnapped in the capital last week.

An Islamist militant group which claimed the kidnapping said on Monday it would release Giuliana Sgrena soon because she was not a spy. Nothing has been heard of her since then.

The group had initially threatened to kill Sgrena if Italy did not withdraw its 3,000 troops from Iraq. Sgrena works for the Rome-based communist newspaper Il Manifesto, which bitterly opposed the Iraq war. *Reuters*

YEAR OF THE ROOSTER

A CHINESE man and his daughter look at Spring Festival decorations in Linfen City, north China's Shanxi Province on Monday. Chinese people will celebrate the Spring Festival, China's Lunar New Year as the year of rooster. AP

Britain sets tougher measures for migrants

LONDON—Prime Minister Tony Blair's government proposed a raft of tough measures Monday to make it harder for unskilled foreigners to seek work or shelter in Britain, including English tests and finger-printing.

The five-year plan follows a call by the opposition Conservative Party last month for quotas for asylum seekers, as the race heats up for an expected general election this May in which immigration will be a key theme.

Support groups and trade experts, however, warned of the dangers of turning the sensitive issue into a political game, with the two main parties each wanting to take the toughest stance on foreigners.

"It is a practical and systematic response to the real problems of asylum and immigration," said Home Secretary Charles Clarke as he introduced the proposals in parliament.

"It will provide a simple and robust system for economic migration; it will tighten our rules for permanent settlement to ensure that those who stay do bring benefits to the United Kingdom," he said.

The Conservative Party, however, instantly rejected the plan, which excludes EU nationals, as "headline-grabbing" rhetoric before the election.

"It goes no way toward sorting out an asylum and immigration system, which is a total shambles," said shadow home secretary David Davis.

"This is the latest headline-grabbing initiative from a panic-stricken government in the run-up to a general election," he told ministers.

Britain currently admits 140,000 to 150,000 immigrants per year.

Under the government's plan, foreigners applying to work in Britain will be considered under a new points-based scheme that will consist of four tiers, ranging from highly skilled to low skilled and students.

An independent advisory body will decide which talents are needed and allocate points accordingly.

The relatives of foreign migrants with residency will lose an automatic right to gain their own permits, and there will be no automatic right for permanent residency for less skilled workers and students. *AFP*

CARNIVAL SEASON. Masked carnival fools are pictured during the traditional carnival parade in Dusseldorf, western Germany. The street spectacles in the carnival strongholds of Dusseldorf, Mainz and Cologne are watched by hundreds of thousands, marking the highlights in Germany's carnival season. AP

World protests new Togo leader

LOME—Togo's Faure Gnassingbe was formally sworn in as president on Monday after his father's sudden death, despite strong condemnation from former colonial power France and African leaders who branded the succession unconstitutional.

Opposition parties called for a "Togo dead country" protest over the next two days, urging people to stay at home to mark their rejection of what they described as "a military coup."

Gnassingbe was named to the top job by the West African nation's army on Saturday hours after the death of his father, Gnassingbe Eyadema, who was Africa's longest-serving leader.

Faure Gnassingbe took his oath of office in front of judges and lawmakers. Western diplomats boycotted the ceremony at the presidential palace in the former French colony's capital Lome.

"Before God and before the Togolese people, sole holders of the national sovereignty, we Faure Gnassingbe assume the duties of president of the republic," said the 39-year-old, wearing a suit and a scarf in the red, yellow and green national colors.

Togo sought to hush critics on Sunday by hastily altering its constitution to retroactively sanction the succession.

Originally, the head of the national assembly was meant to take over in the event of the president's death.

Yet international condemnation still poured in on Monday.

"All African leaders should not accept what has happened in that country until there is a democratic transition," Nigeria's leader Olusegun Obasanjo, who chairs the African Union, said in Zambia's capital Lusaka.

"Events that have happened since the death of President Eyadema do not give us comfort that peace will follow," he said.

Lome was calm, with soldiers manning machine-guns around the presidential palace. Borders, closed since Saturday, reopened.

But in a sign of people's edginess, a burst of gunfire in the city center sent residents running for cover. State television later said prison guards had fired warning shots to stop detainees trying to escape from Lome's main jail.

France, whose President Jacques Chirac was a close friend of Eyadema, expressed concern at "the changes which depart from the institutional process as laid down in Togo's constitution." *Reuters*

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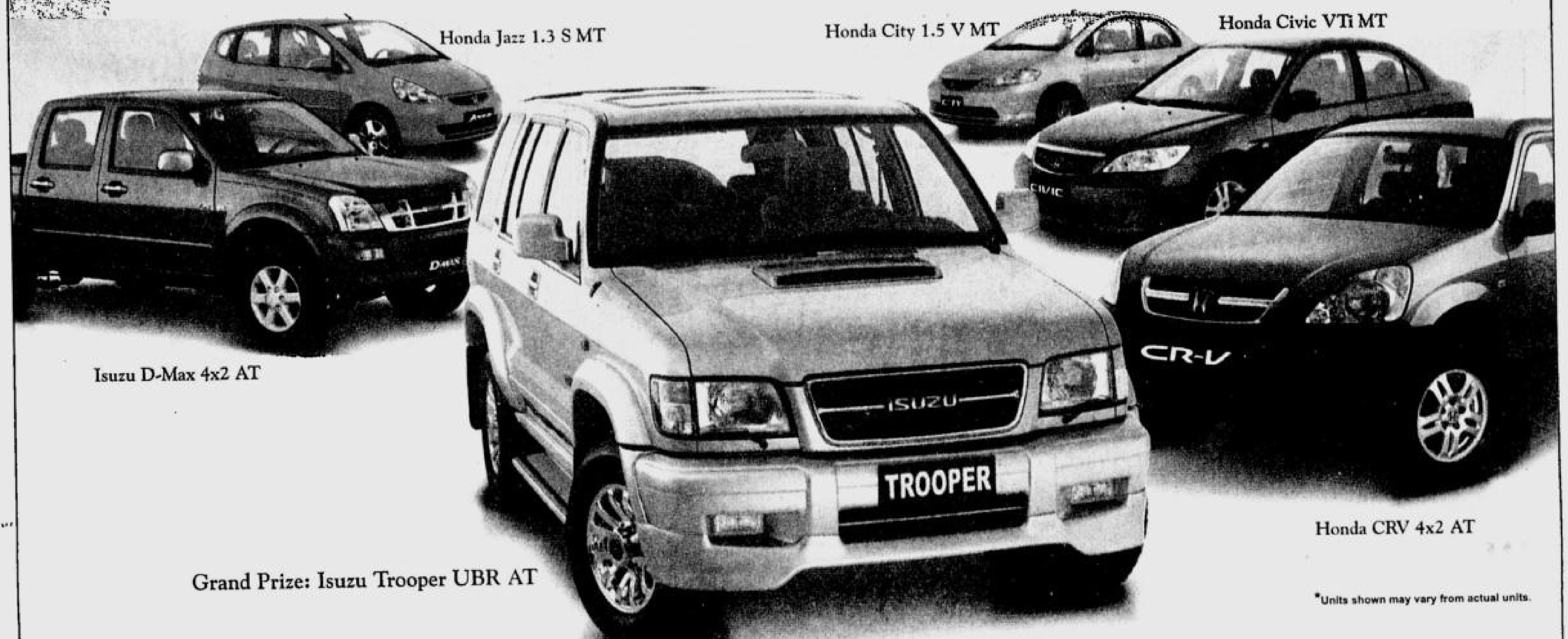

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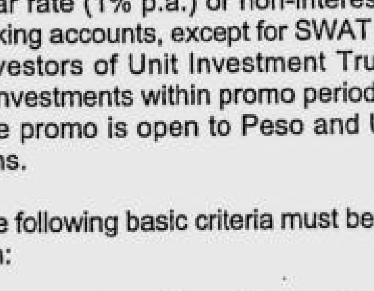

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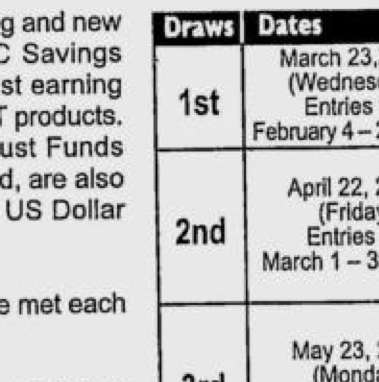

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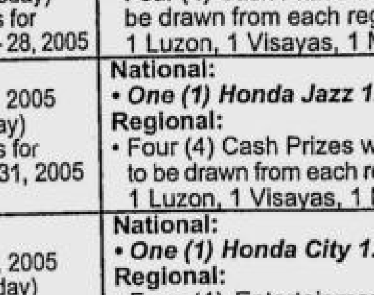

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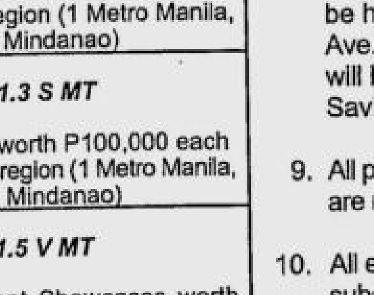

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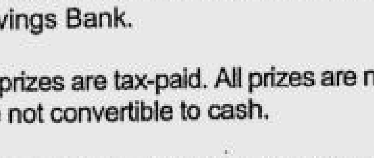

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Draws	Dates	Prizes
1st	March 23,2005 (Wednesday) Entries for February 4 – 28, 2005	**Regional:** • Four (4) Cash Prizes worth P50,000 each to be drawn from each region (1 Metro Manila, 1 Luzon, 1 Visayas, 1 Mindanao)
2nd	April 22, 2005 (Friday) Entries for March 1 – 31, 2005	**National:** ***• One (1) Honda Jazz 1.3 S MT*** **Regional:** • Four (4) Cash Prizes worth P100,000 each to be drawn from each region (1 Metro Manila, 1 Luzon, 1 Visayas, 1 Mindanao)
3rd	May 23, 2005 (Monday) Entries for April 1 - 30, 2005	**National:** ***• One (1) Honda City 1.5 V MT*** **Regional:** • Four (4) Entertainment Showcases worth P100,000 each to be drawn from each region (1 Metro Manila, 1 Luzon, 1 Visayas, 1 Mindanao)
4th	June 23, 2005 (Thursday) Entries for May 1 - 31, 2005	**National:** ***• One (1) Honda Civic VTi MT*** **Regional:** • Four (4) Outdoor Showcases worth P100,000 each to be drawn from each region (1 Metro Manila, 1 Luzon, 1 Visayas, 1 Mindanao)
5th	July 22, 2005 (Friday) Entries for June 1 - 30, 2005	**National:** ***• One (1) Isuzu D-Max 4X2 AT*** **Regional:** • Four (4) Home Theater Showcases worth P150,000 each to be drawn from each region (1 Metro Manila, 1 Luzon, 1 Visayas, 1 Mindanao)
6th	August 23, 2005 (Tuesday) Entries for July 1 - 31, 2005	**National:** ***• One (1) Honda CRV 4X2 8-seater AT*** **Regional:** • Four Kitchen Showcases worth P150,000 each to be drawn from each region (1 Metro Manila, 1 Luzon, 1 Visayas, 1 Mindanao)
Grand	September 23, 2005 (Friday) Entries for Feb. 4 - Aug. 31, 2005	**National:** ***• One (1) Isuzu Trooper UBR AT*** **Regional:** • Four(4) Cash Prizes worth P1,000,000 each to be drawn from each region (1 Metro Manila, 1 Luzon, 1 Visayas, 1 Mindanao)

8. All raffle numbers generated from February 4, 2005 to August 31, 2005 are included in the Grand Draw. Raffle draw winners will be electronically drawn. All draws will be held at 4:00 p.m., at the RCBC Plaza, 6819 Ayala Ave., Makati City 0727. Any change in time and venue will have notification at branches of RCBC and RCBC Savings Bank.
9. All prizes are tax-paid. All prizes are non-transferable and are not convertible to cash.
10. All employees of RCBC and RCBC Savings Bank, their subsidiaries and advertising/promotions agencies, and their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from this promo.
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OPINION

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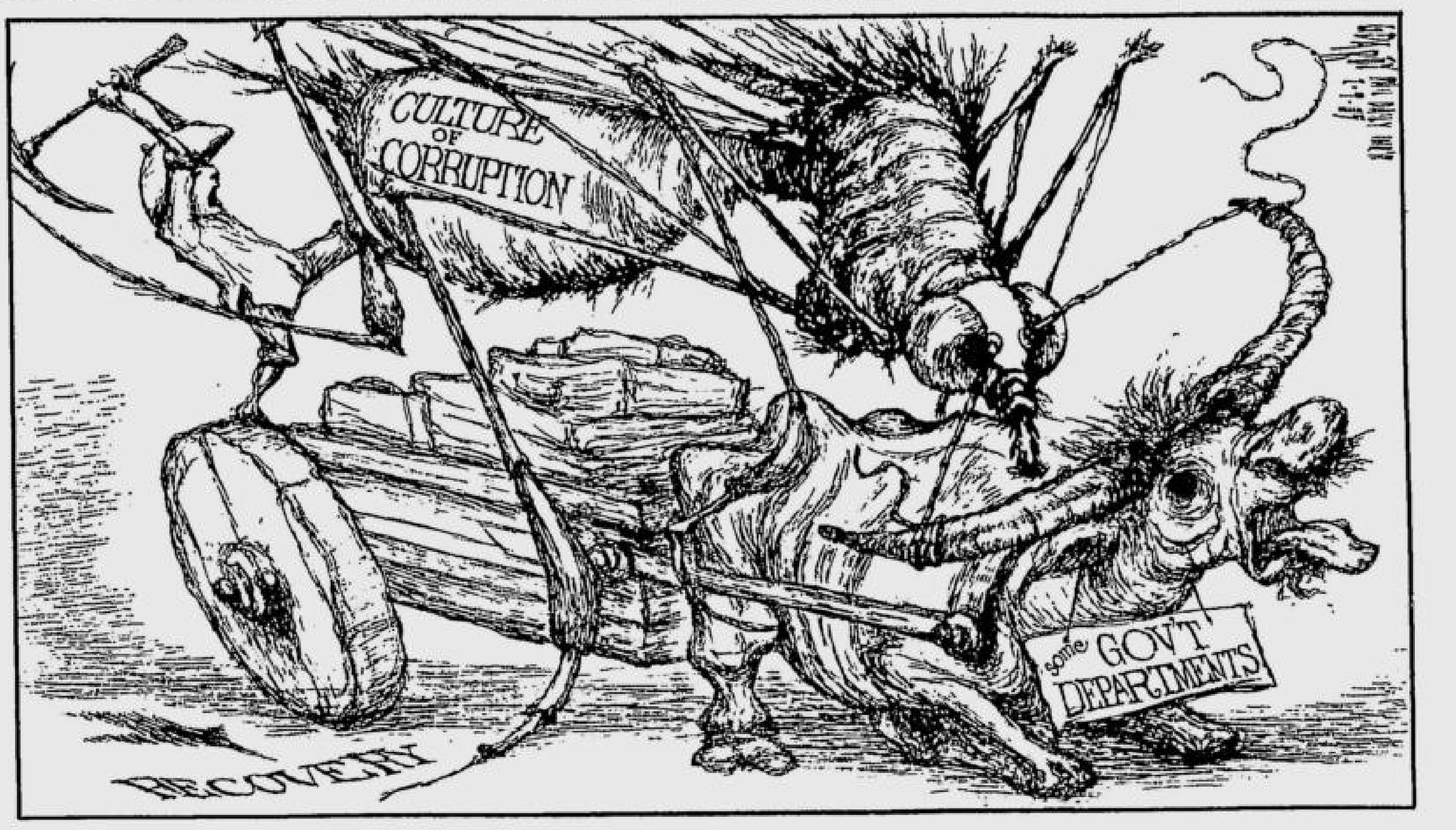

The home front

EDITORIAL

US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone recently gave this advice to Filipinos: "You need to decide what kind of relationship you want to have with Iraq—how you want Iraqis to remember Filipinos and the Philippines in the future."

This came, of course, in the wake of the renewed American propaganda offensive after the elections in Iraq. The United States obviously wants to make the most of the enthusiasm for elections shown by the Iraqi people. But as Filipinos know all too well, the hard part after elections is the counting—and living with the results.

The truth is, as impending American activities show, the area of primary concern for the Philippines in the so-called "war on terror" is our home front. The Philippines and the United States are in the process of undertaking 28 joint military exercises this year. Twenty exercises will consist of combined maneuvers while the rest are to focus on anti-narcotics efforts and the training of light reaction units.

It is well known and well accepted that Jemaah Islamiyah either has camps of its own or has found sanctuary in the camps of rebel groups. The presence of JI trainees represents a genuine threat to the country and the region.

President Macapagal-Arroyo is optimistic about the prospects of the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front concluding a peace agreement that can then help remove the basis for rebel-JI cooperation and support. "Actually, there is... peace in Mindanao," she said recently, "so writing the agreement is only making formal a reality." She went on to add, "In the meantime, what I can say is that our peace talks with the MILF are holding very well and our prospects for the peace process in Mindanao are very, very good."

If the President's optimism turns out to be validated by events, this still means she has to devote the country's political energies and financial resources to hunting down JI agents in the country, and to ensuring rogue MILF or even Moro National Liberation Front elements do not develop alternative alliances with the JI. There remains, too, the continuing government on-again, off-again peace talks and then all-out war strategy in dealing with the National Democratic Front and the New People's Army.

From a combination of American pressure and the findings of their own governments, Europe has slowly been showing an inclination to viewing the CPP-NPA as a terrorist group, even as countries like Norway do what they can to facilitate talks. Whichever tack the government takes, the increasingly belligerent behavior of the CPP-NPA points to its suffering from the erosion of foreign sympathies for it. However, government strategies must inevitably include the development of poverty-stricken provinces that are breeding grounds for rebellion and insurgency.

The President has already issued Executive Order No. 404 to implement an agreement with the NDF to lay down operational guidelines for a Joint Monitoring Committee to oversee implementation of the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law. The agreement was signed by the government and the NDF in the Hague on March 16, 1998. The government monitoring committee will closely work with the Commission on Human Rights in probing human rights violations and monitor the government's compliance with its international treaty obligations on human rights. The country has a golden opportunity to show it has nothing to hide.

Development for provinces mired in poverty and scarred by insurgency and counter-insurgency requires billions of pesos, much political capital and tremendous energy. This leaves little room for expeditions overseas, particularly in equally insurgency-stricken nations like Iraq. If the Philippines really wants to help fight international terrorism, it already has its hands full here at home.

The home front is the primary front; our national security interests will be largely determined by how we handle home-grown or home-hosted threats, whether it is the JI, its allies, or the NPA and its depredations. The contributions of local and national officials and institutions, including the military, also point to the need for the government to concentrate its efforts at home.

PR drive vs 'counterfeit' medicines confirmed

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

TWO weeks after this column dwelt on a propaganda drive against government importations of medicines to provide Filipinos with cheaper medicines ("Medicines imported by RP gov't are not fake," As I See It, 2-24-05), I received a faxed letter from Bong Osorio, communication consultant of the Coalition Against Counterfeit Medicines, which confirmed that there really is a drive by various entities against "counterfeit" medicines. He denied, however, that it is against the parallel importations by the Philippine International Trading Center (PTTC) headed by Secretary Roberto Pagdanganan. He said the objective is "to raise awareness on the part of the public on the dangers of the 'counterfeit' medicines (and) does not intend in any way to allude that the medicines being imported by the PTTC are counterfeit. In fact, this is precisely the issue raised by the DOH (Department of Health) and DTI (Department of Trade) even before they agreed to be a part of the coalition and support its initiatives. Hence, this issue was thoroughly threshed out by the coalition before it launched its campaign so as the same would not be seen as a program against government's parallel imports."

Osorio said the campaign's primary goal is "to arm the public with information against medicines that do not pass trough the regulatory processes of the Bureau of Food and Drugs (BFAD). It aims to educate unsuspecting Filipinos on how to detect a counterfeit from a genuine medicine, and directs them to a hotline so they can report incidences of counterfeiting.

"By World Health Organization (WHO) definition, counterfeiting can apply to both branded and generic products. Thus, counterfeit medicines may include:

"1. products with the correct ingredients but fake packaging;

"2. products with the wrong ingredients;

"3. products without active ingredients;

"4. products with insufficient ingredients.

"Please understand that the coalition's efforts are not against medicines that meet regulatory requirements set by the BFAD, but are against the potentially dangerous counterfeit medicines that deliberately avoid *regulatory scrutiny* (italics ours) for whatever reasons. Obviously, this is the target of the coalition because they pose serious and grave danger to our countrymen's health, safety and well-being."

The coalition's communications consultant concludes: "We hope this clarifies some of the points raised in your column."

No, it does not, as far as the consuming public is concerned. The confusion is created by the unfortunate use by the coalition of the word "counterfeit." By WHO definition (WHO has often been accused of being a "tool" of US big business), "counterfeit" precisely includes the parallel imports of the PTTC that, as No. 1 of the definitions describes, are "products with the correct ingredients but fake packaging." The PTTC imports are genuine medicines manufactured abroad by subsidiaries of the mother multinational pharmaceutical companies (in other words, sister companies of the multinationals here) but brought here because they are cheaper. Their packaging and labels may be different from those manufactured here. Therefore, they fall under the WHO definition of "counterfeit."

But as the Feb. 24 column pointed out, in the Philippines, "counterfeit" is confused with "fake." In fact, that is the word—"fake"—that is often used in news reports in media because it is much shorter than "counterfeit" which is too long for headline purposes. I have not read in the newspapers or heard on TV and radio any explanation from the coalition about the difference between "counterfeit" and "fake" in the case of medicines. As far as the public is concerned, which is not privy to the discussion of the coalition, "counterfeit" is the same as "fake" and that includes the cheaper government imports. Therefore, they are scared into buying only the more expensive medicines made here by the multinationals.

Why not use "substandard" instead of "counterfeit," so the meaning becomes clearer? The PTTC imports are not substandard because they are really "genuine" and have the correct ingredients and as potent as those made here by the multinationals. But I think the multinationals like to use "counterfeit" because the PTTC imports fall into its definition. I suspect that the real reason for the propaganda campaign is the fear of the multinationals that the government's parallel imports will eat up into their huge market share. I think the DOH and DTI were just suckered in to make it legitimate and credible.

If the coalition is really after the welfare, health and well-being of the Filipinos, why does it not concentrate on lowering the prices of medicines? That will make imports unnecessary.

And speaking of substandard medicines, why not inquire into the efficacy of so many "medicines" claiming so many benefits in their advertisements—packaged herbs, leaves and fruits claiming to be good against diabetes, high blood pressure, cancer and a lot of other diseases, just like the snake oil of old—but which escape "regulatory scrutiny" by the BFAD because they are classified as "food supplements"? I have not heard the DOH explain that there are no clear scientific proof that these "food supplements" really do what they claim to do. Instead, some doctors and even media personalities are advertised as endorsing this or that product, and they don't even get a slap on the wrist.

First stone

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

RONNIE Amorado and Albert Alejo had quite a mouthful to say during the first Jesuit-sponsored anti-graft seminar last week. The seminar was part of the group's ongoing campaign against corruption, called "Ehem!", and was appropriately enough held at the Land Transportation Office, an agency that used to have a reputation, alongside the BIR, Customs and Immigration, that truly induced coughs of "ehem," or less polite reactions from the public. Amorado is a professor at the Ateneo de Davao and Alejo is a Jesuit and the head of the Mindawan Initiatives for Cultural Dialogue of the same school.

The Catholic Church, which has been fulminating against the corrupt and ungodly, they said, should first look at itself. "The Catholic Church played a big role in corrupting the system," said Amorado. During Spanish times, the Church did little to fight official corruption, and even benefited greatly from it. "Remember, there was no separation then between church and state."

For his part, Alejo pointed out: "The Church teaches generosity and charity, but only in the form of donations to it, not in the form of paying taxes correctly... (It) has given rise to the mentality that if a Christian has money to spare, he should give it to the Church rather than to the government."

It's good advice, the local Catholic Church learning to practice what it preaches. There's a whole history to show that the Church, though part of the solution, is also part of the problem—probably more the second than the first. It's a Church, quite incidentally, that is itself cleaved into rich and poor, in part involuntarily—some parishes are poorer than others, headed by parish priests who do not carry much clout among their superiors—and in part voluntarily—some priests (and bishops) believe that the task of Christianity is to build a Church of the Poor (or for the poor) and not a Church of the Rich (or for the rich). As with the society itself, the pocket of wealth and opulence at the top is matched by breathtaking deprivation below, a spectacular divide that doesn't suggest it holds on to values conducive to honesty, or indeed Christianity.

The Church is easily the biggest landowner in this country, and continues to grow so. Though apparently with the application of less duress now than then, even if the importuning remains strident and incessant. I know of a group of Leyteños who built a shrine to their patron, the Sto. Niño, somewhere in the outskirts of Quezon City, and who heard no end of beseeching from the parish priest of the area for them to donate the property to the Church, the better for them presumably to be looked upon with favor by God.

During Spanish times, the friars acquired much land by threatening landowners at their deathbeds, not often subtly, with hellfire in the afterlife if they did not make up for their sins by lavish tokens of charity to God's representatives on earth. The landowners, who had in life lived up to Balzac's famous aphorism that a great crime always underlay a great wealth, and being generally spiritual cowards alongside being physical bullies, were not always loath to buy off God with part of their loot. To the weeping and gnashing of teeth of their prospective heirs who still had a while to go before they got into that state.

Amorado and Alejo's complaint that Church officials slept with the enemy, or kept their silence when resolute crooks were also generous donors, applies as much today as it did in the past. The selective perception was patent in Jaime Cardinal Sin's fulminations against Erap—and remonstrations with the Protestant, and, worse, tightfisted, Fidel Ramos—on one hand, and tolerance of Cory and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo even in the face of wholesale pillage on the other.

It wasn't Sin who upbraided Cory for replacing Marcos' cronies with her own, it was a newspaperman by the name of Chino Roces. Though much favored by Cory for his role in fighting Marcos, Roces used an occasion held to honor him to speak out stridently against the corruption that arose after Marcos' downfall. It did not endear him to his friends in Malacañang, but if you are a believer you have got to believe it earned him points in heaven. He died shortly afterward.

And it wasn't Sin who upbraided GMA for burning people's money like a drunken sailor to campaign. He endorsed her, in fact, saying she was the moral choice. Patronage runs deep in this country, though it wasn't always clear who was patronizing whom in this case—GMA Cardinal Sin or the other way around. GMA was a beneficiary of Edsa 2, and Cardinal Sin often looked like he was merely protecting an investment.

Amorado and Alejo are right to suggest that the Church looks at itself first before it looks at anybody with an eye to spotting malfeasance. But I would go further and extend the advice to all the institutions of this country that propose to exert moral suasion on the public. The advice applies as well to business, which too has been loudly railing against crookedness in public service but which cannot seem to spot its own ungodly practices (investing in power is still the best way to do business in this country) in its reckless pursuit of gain. The same is true of the media which have been exposing perfidy in high places but which too cannot seem to notice the extent to which they collude with the perfidious to advance their own interests. And the same is true of us, the public, as well, who revile public officials who steal but implore them on bended knees to act as *ninong* or *ninang* in the baptisms of our sons and the marriages of our daughters.

The Church does have something wise to say about all this, taken from the very mouth of its Lord and Master:

"Let him who is without sin cast the first stone."

Not safe anywhere

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

AS far as I can remember, the threat made by Romeo Roxas, president of the Green Circle Properties and Resources, to news reporter Luz Rimban of the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, for her report on the alleged illegal logging activities of Roxas' company, is the first direct assault by a private individual on press freedom in the metropolitan Manila area. As such, the threat has a chilling implication for journalists operating in the metropolis.

Journalists, especially those on the staff of the leading newspapers and the big TV-radio networks, have tended to be complacent in the belief that because Manila is the media center of the nation, metro journalism cloaks them with a special immunity from harm and violence. They have come to believe that their provincial brethren are more vulnerable to violent reprisals, as borne out by the fact that most of the 60 journalists who have been killed since 1986 were community journalists.

Although the case of Rimban does not involve physical violence, the mere fact that threats were blatantly hurled at her constitutes a bold act by a private person offended by her report, who was apparently trying to test how far offended parties can go in suppressing stories and how effective is the press in defending its members and its right to disclose information on activities injurious to the public interest.

Rimban's two-part report, published by leading metropolitan dailies, including the INQUIRER, was devoted to illegal logging—an issue that has been at the center of public concern, following the disasters that came in the wake of the typhoons and floods in some Luzon provinces.

Sheila Coronel, executive director of the PCIJ, has taken the threats on her staff as dangerous acts which cannot be taken lying down without encouraging further abuse. Indicating that she can back her allegation of threats made by Roxas, she wrote a letter to Roxas last Feb. 3, detailing the telephone exchange between him and Rimban. According to Coronel's letter, Roxas allegedly phoned Rimban and told her, "You know, if you were not a woman, I could do a lot of things to you." Coronel also said that Roxas, a lawyer, had allegedly hinted that he had done dreadful things to others in the past and had the capacity to do so again.

Since Coronel has gone on record protesting against Roxas' actions, he can dispute her allegations or even take legal action against not only Coronel and the PCIJ but also against Rimban for her offending report.

Roxas, of course, has his own side of the logging story. He told Rimban in the phone call, "You maligned me. Why do you listen to NGOs? I am not an illegal logger."

Rimban's story did publish Roxas' side. "I am not a logger, I am just clearing my land," he was quoted as saying in the article.

Rimban has informed PNP Director General Edgardo Aglipay of the incident.

"You see, we cannot take such threats lightly, considering that 10 journalists were killed in the Philippines last year," Coronel said in her letter to Roxas. "As a lawyer, you know very well that making grave threats against anyone is a legal offense."

It's not clear whether the Philippine National Police will take security measures to protect journalists facing threats. Since 1986, no prosecution has prospered on the cases of 60 slain journalists. The police have been trying to determine whether the attacks on the journalists were related to their work, since in most cases, the line between official and non-official activities is blurred.

From experience, the press cannot be confident in the protection of Philippine law enforcement, which does not serve as an effective deterrent to violence. The press is better off serving notice that it won't stand for abuse from either private individuals or government officials.

Only recently, the international media group, Reporters Without Borders, expressed shock at the killing of Edgar Amoro, a key witness to the murder of his friend, journalist Edgar Damalerio. Amoro was shot dead in Pagadian City on Feb. 2. Covered by the justice department's witness protection program, Amoro was the second witness to be killed by accomplices of the alleged chief suspect of the murder of Damalerio, ex-police officer, Guillermo Wapile.

Reporters Without Borders expressed dismay over the government's inability to protect witnesses in a trial that President Macapagal-Arroyo had described as an indication of success in the fight against violence to journalists.

The threats to Rimban followed the burning on Jan. 11 of an ABS-CBN van in Mandaluyong, by a group called "Group K" which claimed its members were supporters of the late opposition presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. The group accused ABS-CBN of "suppressing the truth" in its coverage of the May election. Former President Joseph Estrada gave the bombing a spin by saying the attack should serve as a warning to media organizations allegedly engaged in biased reporting.

The administration condemned the burning of the van as an attack on press freedom, but an investigation by the PNP produced no result. In a speech before the Manila Overseas Press Club, the President said: "I stand before you tonight deeply committed to protecting the health, life and safety of every journalist who plies his or her trade in the pursuit of truth and justice. And I will not rest until those assassins are brought to justice. You deserve no less."

To avoid false expectations, journalists will have to fight their own battles. They have to draw the line when the fight is carried into their home grounds. Manila, where all the national authorities are seated, is where the press is going to stop the assault on press freedom. If they cannot be safe in Manila, journalists cannot be safe anywhere.

Wine, romance and the meaning of life

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

THE BEST way to enjoy the movie "Sideways" is while sipping from a glass of wine (preferably one made from Miles the movie hero's favorite Pinot variety) and perhaps nibbling on cheese and crackers.

Barring that, then one should watch the movie with intoxicating company, a new love or an old one who continues to fascinate. And then, after the movie, rush out and get themselves to a wine bar, if only to make the magic of this deceptively simple and quiet movie last a little longer. In fact, I guarantee that after "Sideways," even certified Light Coke and beer devotees will feel their palates and noses itching for a wine tasting. "Sideways" should do for wine what "Saturday Night Fever" did for disco.

Described as a "road trip movie," "Sideways" defies convention by making the main characters not young men in search of themselves, but rather two middle-aged men desperate to escape their dreary reality and fighting off the moment of ultimate surrender to their humdrum fates.

Miles (Paul Giamatti) is a high school English teacher and aspiring novelist, sunk in depression after his divorce and treating his best friend Jack (Thomas Haden Church), a has-been actor, to an extended stag party of a weeklong tour through the wine region of California. Miles views the road trip as a time for re-living his youth and introducing a good friend to the pleasures of wine. Jack, on the other hand, sees the trip as one last chance to indulge in sexual debauchery and conquest, a freedom he fears he will lose once he's hitched.

With such wildly contrasting expectations, not to mention personalities, sparks are bound to fly. What we end up with is a movie that explores not just the mysteries of friendship and the complexities of our relationships, but also the fragility of our hearts and the frailty of our dreams.

* * *

"SIDEWAYS" pulled off a scoop at the recent Screen Actors Guild Awards when it was cited for "Best Ensemble Acting." The award is especially fitting for "Sideways," since it indeed draws its strength not from a single star headliner or a ton of special effects, but from the interaction of its cast and the heartwarming story that manages to touch viewers even as its telling dares take surprising and quirky turns.

I especially loved the fact that "Sideways" gives lots of screen time to journeyman actors, performers like Giamatti and Church who look familiar to us because they've played countless supporting roles, reliable and consistent, allowing bigger stars to shine. In "Sideways," it's the remarkable partnership they share, the give-and-take between them that makes the movie so enjoyable.

I also liked the fact that Virginia Madsen, who may have fallen out of leading lady contention because of her age, is given a chance here to show off what she has. The scene in which her character Maya explains to Miles her fascination for wine is made all the more memorable because of the quiet, grounded presence that emanates from her.

But back to wine. Miles' love for Pinot is explained by the fact that it is very much like him: complex and delicate, easily bruised, quick to deteriorate. Jack, on the other hand, is more like the "easy-drinking" Cabernet, popular and accessible, "growing wherever it is planted." However you like it, or don't, wine proves a pleasing analogy of the many kinds of human beings there are around us and within us.

* * *

CALL "Alfie" an "anti-Valentine" movie. Far from celebrating romance and relationships, it shows up the downside of serial dating and endless sexual conquest. "What's it all about?" indeed.

Not having seen the original that made a major star out of Michael Caine, there's no way for me to tell if the remake, starring the truly scrumptious Jude Law, managed to improve on it or merely proved a sequel was unnecessary. I can imagine, though, how a movie about a chauffeur—Lothario who pursues a string of partners while keeping one or two in reserve for slack times, fits much better with the mores of the Swinging Sixties, when sexual license was a form of freedom welcomed with mindless glee.

Sex in the Age After AIDS, on the other hand, seems burdened with the weight of risk and consequence, and such heedless gallivanting by our latter-day Alfie strikes viewers as not just irresponsible, but quite hazardous to his and his partners' health.

That's why, no matter how the music and production design strive to create a carefree, lightweight atmosphere, "Alfie" never quite rises above the cloud of melancholy that hovers over it. And despite his drop-dead gorgeousness and magnificent bod, there's a point in the film when Jude Law manages to look aging and defeated, when his "mature" mistress (Susan Sarandon) tells him she replaced him with a younger man. One's heart went out to him.

Lovers beware. Watch "Alfie" at your own risk. For far from setting you in the mood for love and friskiness, it may just make you think twice about why you're with the one you're with, and what meaning you hope to derive from this current relationship and others that may follow.

Sometimes, asking "what's it all about" can be downright dangerous to illusions of the heart.

* * *

WHAT does the application of the expanded value-added tax mean to Filipino women? How do women view this new measure? How will their lives change because of it?

Abanse! Pinay, the women's party-list group, is sponsoring a forum on "Women and the E-VAT" at 5 p.m. today, with economist and TV host Winnie Monsod as lead discussant. The forum will be held at Cravings on the fifth floor of the Shangri-la Mall along Edsa.

While the event is free, it will be "pay-as-you-order." And come early because seating is limited.

The Chinese in Manila (1846)

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

ALTHOUGH I am about one-eighth Chinese, my paternal great-grandfather being a full-blooded Chinese who allegedly had a braided ponytail, we never celebrate Chinese New Year. As a boy I just noticed the boxes of *tikoy* that came in some time in February as a signal for Chinese New Year. Now that business is down, the *tikoy* doesn't descend on us as it used to but a growing number of Filipino friends seem to be preparing round fruits, red clothes and fireworks for the Chinese New Year. Times must really be hard for people to go into feng shui, Chinese horoscopes, and have those gaudy ornaments that allegedly bring luck, like the frog with the coin in the mouth or the cat with the waving paw.

Thinking of all this made me look up what Jean Mallat said about the Chinese in the Philippines in 1846. In his two-volume work "Les Philippines" are chapters on different racial types. The Chinese take most of a chapter shared with *mestizos*. Mallat described their looks, the trades they engaged in, and even their personality as a people.

Not much seems to have changed in over a century, except physical features. Mallat described Manila Chinese as having "average height" (whatever that meant in 1846). Most of the Chinese were male who left their families in China in search of a new life in the Philippines. Mallat wrote that while men in China were good-looking, those in Manila, "who have come for the most part from Macao, Chanceo, Nyngo and Canton, are very ugly and this is explained partly by their social position, for these are generally coulis (porters) and domestics who come to the Philippines to do business and who send their savings every year to their families." (These days we have Jerry Yan smiling from huge Bench billboards around the city and we watch Chinese telenovelas, and the characters look very much like Manila Chinese.)

When Mallat mentioned that the Manila Chinese in 1846 sent their earnings back to their families in China, I could not help but think that we have come full-circle. In the 19th century, men usually from southern China came to the Philippines to trade, practice a trade or just find work. When I was a boy, some of my friends had real Chinese amahs as their *yayas*, but today Filipinas work in Hong Kong as domestic helpers. Our compatriots today also send their earnings to families back home.

Reading Mallat reminded me of many prints, lithographs and photographs in the late 19th and early 20th centuries that show us that in the past, Philippine Chinese did not look anywhere close to the stereotype characters of "Mano Po" 1, 2 and 3 whose lively brocade costumes are bought from souvenir shops and are not worn by Chinese. Mallat described their costume as:

"...similar to that of coulis of Macao and Canton; this is a kind of overcoat in the form of a blouse, a shirt called bisia and wide pants made of white cloth, with very low seat, fastened by a string; sometimes these pants are black or blue. They shave their heads, leaving only a braided tail and wear a small black cap tapped with a red knot [again something usually bought by tourists as souvenirs from China]. Their shoes are black, rounded at the tip with thick soles made of paper; they get them ready-made from their country." (Today we know these light distinctive black shoes as "kung-fu shoes.")

Then as now, the Manila Chinese shared a reputation for being good at business and math, "apart from wholesale and retail commerce which they share in Manila with *mestizos*; they are also spice-dealers, fruit-dealers, cook-shop keepers, pastry shop keepers, either at home or on the streets. Other Chinese are tailors, bootmakers, shoemakers, soap-makers. In a word it would be difficult to enumerate all the kinds of industries they engage in. Moreover they send their savings regularly to China."

Mallat described a Chinese using an abacus and concluded that though the Chinese have a reputation as good accountants "they do not know decimal calculation; they also have account books, but it seems that they are hardly skilled in what is properly called bookkeeping."

That of course is his point of view. What is common to all travel accounts of the Philippines is the graphic description of eye, ear and nose cleaning by Chinese that supplements many illustrations of this kind of livelihood in old books:

"It is very strange to watch without being seen, this part of their toilette, which is done with the aid of a razor shaped like a triangular chopping-knife. The barber runs a kind of small brush on the lids, the mucous membrane, on the cartilage of the lower lid and even on the eyeball to stimulate a tickling sensation: this operation causes a lot of ophthalmias.

"Cleaning of the nose and ears, by means of pins and small, especially made instruments is still the domain of Chinese barbers...They put their customers to sleep by touches and truly magnetic frictions; they run their hands from head to the shoulders and even the armpits and then shave the customer, and when the operation is finished, the latter gets up, stretches his arms and yawns as if after a long sleep."

There is a lot of material on the Chinese in the Philippines waiting to be read and help us see their influence on our history and our culture.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

'Gongxi' or 'kungsi'

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

THE OTHER day a friend told me she wanted her grandchild enrolled in a local Chinese school so he could learn Chinese, which she felt would be an advantage later on.

She's right, yet many Filipinos, including Chinese-Filipinos turn their backs on Chinese, which is offered not just in Chinese schools but, at the college level, for example, at the University of the Philippines.

Locally, the ethnic Chinese constitute only about 2 percent of the total population, but many own large and medium-sized business firms, so it's not unusual to see job advertisements looking for people who can speak Minnan Hokkien, the language spoken by most local ethnic Chinese or the Chinese national language Mandarin (the communist Chinese prefer the more proletarian name, Putonghua, which literally means "ordinary language").

Note that although there are 201 living languages in China, as listed in the Summer Institute of Linguistics' website, most of these use one common script, which has been an important reason why such a large country has stayed unified.

Because of the sheer size of China's population (some 1.3 billion), Putonghua is currently the world's most widely spoken language. To be able to speak Putonghua can mean access to many opportunities, especially with China developing so rapidly.

Putonghua isn't limited to China alone. It's also spoken by many overseas Chinese and is sometimes referred to as Huayi, the language of the "Hua" or Chinese. Many times, in cities as diverse as Bangkok and Bristol, Singapore and Salvador, I'd enter a restaurant or a shop and as soon as I'd have an inkling that the owners might be Chinese, I'd say something in Chinese. Like a magic mantra, I'd find myself getting hefty discounts, special tables in restaurants and dishes not listed on the menu and, quite simply, new friends.

A musical language

Business, shopping and friendships aside, Chinese is worth learning for its own sake. It is a language that is as complex as it is fascinating. Like many Asian languages, most Chinese dialects are tonal, meaning the pitch with which it's spoken determines differences in meaning. In Putonghua for example, depending on which tone is used, "ma" can mean "hemp," "to scold," "mother" or "horse,"

Learning these tonal languages early may have an unexpected benefit. Psychologists at the University of California in San Diego recently released results of research showing that children who learned Putonghua as babies were far more likely to develop perfect pitch than those who were raised to speak English. Perfect pitch is the ability to name or sing a musical note, and is considered to be relatively rare, with only 1 in 10,000 Americans having this gift.

Imagine that, being able to speak Putonghua giving you the advantage of being able to do business with the Chinese, including being a hit at karaoke, which is immensely popular in China. (I have to say, though, my memories of karaoke in China are as unpleasant as those of karaoke here, or maybe it's just that karaoke, in Manila or Beijing, tends to attract those with the most imperfect musical pitch.)

Idea words

Some of you might be asking which Chinese language would be most useful. Hokkien? Putonghua? Cantonese? I'd still suggest Putonghua because it is the national language, and I'd add that you might want to learn to read and write Chinese as well. I've mentioned that one common script is used all throughout China, so whether you're in Hong Kong or Beijing, you can make your way around if you can read the written form. The bad news is that Chinese does not use an alphabet and instead uses thousands of ideographs, which I'll explain shortly.

There have been many attempts to try to Romanize Chinese, meaning get the words spelled out with the Roman alphabet. The title of my column shows two versions of the greeting "Wishing you happiness," which you can use today, Chinese New Year, and on other occasions, from birthdays to graduations. In China today, there is one system called *pinyin* which has tried to standardize the Romanized versions of the sounds. "*Gongxi*" is the pinyin version while "*kung si*" is a Romanized form from another system.

Unfortunately, you can't get by with these Romanized systems. First, the tones have to be learned. Second, the same Romanized word may refer to many different ideographs.

How many ideographs would one have to learn? You could get by with a thousand, but someone truly fluent would know much more. I'm a novice at this, despite several years of Chinese classes at Xavier School, but I've found that learning to read and write Chinese is a lifelong experience... and a voyage of discovery.

Ai

Ideographs are fascinating because you can break them down into their components and, in the process, quite often, you learn something about Chinese culture. The character for a male, *nan*, shows a rice paddy on top and "strength" on the bottom, showing how maleness was defined in an agrarian society. On the other hand, *nu*, the character for a female, shows a person kneeling, reflecting the feudal low status assigned to women in the past.

The ideograph for a female, when combined with other characters to form other words, speaks volumes about Chinese gender concepts. A female under a roof gives you the word *an*or peace. Combine "female" with "child" and you have the word *hao*, which means "good," reflecting the importance of bearing children.

Even if you don't plan on learning Chinese, I'd suggest you pick up "Analyzed Ideographs" by Tinna K. Wu at National Bookstore (the author once lived in the Philippines and went on to become a Chinese language professor in the United States). I have so many favorite examples from her book but I particularly enjoyed the section where she shows how repeated use of the same character generates amazing new ideographs. For example, put three hands together into one word and, goodness, you know the feeling if you've lost your cell phone to ... a pickpocket!

With Feb. 14 just around the corner, let's do a bit of analysis around the heart. In Chinese, if you write out the character *xin* or "heart" three times, you produce the word *suo*, which means suspicious. Note how in many Asian languages, "heart" refers both to feelings and to thoughts so the message here is that sometimes, maybe around Valentine's especially, we shouldn't bog ourselves down with too much heart.

On the other hand, there's wisdom in the way the Chinese combine the word *shou*, which means "to endure" with *xin*, the heart to produce *ai*. On its own, endurance often means a quiet suffering. But insert the heart—feelings and thinking—and no longer do you just endure, but you have *ai*, or love. In explaining the construction of the Chinese *ai*, Tinna Wu, a pastor's daughter, brings East and West together by quoting from 1 Corinthians 13:4: "It suffers long, and it is kind...It endures all things."

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The coconut gold mine

THIS is in reaction to the news item, "Coco producers wage war vs American soybean groups." (PDI, 1/27/05) This war is long overdue—for decades, as a matter of fact. We, in the Concerned Women of the Philippines, are also outraged by this latest move of the American Soybean Association (ASA), which is again on a vicious campaign to "classify coconut oil under the category of saturated fats from animals" (a health risk to consumers), as it did in the '60s when it falsely portrayed coconut oil as a "health danger and causes heart disease."

The truth must be told. Among the coconut oil's many health, nutrition and healing benefits: it prevents heart disease; high blood pressure; helps lower cholesterol; protects body from breast, colon and other cancers; protects body from ulcers, lung infections, herpes and other diseases; helps eliminate gall bladder and kidney stones; helps prevent and control diabetes; helps prevent bacterial, fungal and viral infections; helps stimulate metabolism; promotes weight loss; controls allergies (asthma, rhinitis, etc.); protects against osteoporosis. There are more, including beauty benefits, but they are just too many to mention. They may seem so incredible, but they are based on published researches, scientific studies, historical records and personal experiences.

Dr. Bruce Fife, a naturapathic doctor and the author of the book "The Healing Miracles of Coconut Oil," states that "we lost the many health benefits that can result from regular consumption of coconut products. Through the cunning marketing strategy of said group, the misguided efforts of public interest groups, we have replaced a good health-promoting fat with a very destructive and harmful one." More information can be downloaded from the Internet, marcola.com; and from studies by Dr. Mary Enig, nutritionist and one of the world's leading authorities on fats and oils; Dr. Jon Kahara, Dr. Conrado Dayrit and Dr. H.B. Calleja, among others.

Dr. Fife also says that coconut oil is the "healthiest oil on earth and is even superior to olive oil." And "Philippine coconuts are considered the best in the world."

Coconut oil can be the Philippines' gold mine if only the government would give its full support. Dr. Dayrit, on a TV interview recently, lamented the fact that so many Filipinos have not been able to take advantage of the many benefits that can be derived from the regular consumption of coconut oil.

The whole country should rally behind this war against the ASA's misrepresentation. We owe it to our people, especially our local coconut producers who have been "taking the beating" because of false information.

Let us support the Philippine coconut industry and start taking this "liquid vitamin" in support of "good health in the 21st century." Truly, the "miracle food" from the "tree of life." Spread the good news!

—ELIZABETH LORENZANA DIAZ,
chair, Concerned Women of the Philippines,
Katipunan Avenue,
Loyola Heights, Quezon City

No protégé of GMA's adviser

THIS concerns the news item titled "Santiago identifies RP's 'big-time illegal loggers." (PDI, 2/1/05) The story mentioned Rolly Ma, one of those in Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago's list of alleged illegal loggers, as "a protégé of a former secretary for special concerns in the Arroyo administration."

To avoid possible confusion among those who know me as a former presidential adviser on special economic concerns under the Arroyo administration, I would like to put on record that I do not remember encountering any Rolly Ma before, during or after my stint as presidential adviser on special concerns.

—NORBERTO B. GONZALES,
presidential chief of staff,
Office of the President,
Malacañang, Manila

Reinstatement an SC order

THE DEPARTMENT of Education would like to respond to the report "DepEd reinstates sex harassment convict, then reviews appointment." (PDI, 1/31/05)

The DepEd ordered the reinstatement of Allyson Belagan in strict compliance with an Oct. 19, 2004 ruling of the Supreme Court, which convicted him of sexual harassment but lightened his penalty from dismissal (the previous decision of the DepEd in 1994) to one-year suspension without pay.

The DepEd is ready to recall Belagan's reinstatement if so instructed or advised by the Supreme Court, which is the final arbiter on this matter.

—FLORENCIO B. ABAD,
secretary,
Department of Education,
DepEd Complex,
Meralco Avenue, Pasig City

ERC clarifies on CNP interconnection

THE ENERGY Regulatory Commission would like to make a clarification with respect to the news article titled "Negros-Panay power link deferred." (PDI, 1/18/05) The reporter quoted an unidentified National Transmission Corp. (Transco) official as saying that ERC consultants recommended a three-year delay for the Negros-Panay component of the Cebu-Negros-Panay (CNP) interconnection project. The ERC never authorized any consultancy group to make such a recommendation or to discuss it with anyone outside the confines of its office.

However, the ERC does not deny that it issued a Show Cause Order, dated Aug. 4, 2004, directing Transco to submit an explanation regarding the commencement of the projects without the approval required under the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (Epira).

—RODOLFO B. ALBANO JR.,
chair and chief executive officer,
Energy Regulatory Commission,
Pacific Center Bldg., San Miguel Avenue,
Pasig City

WHILE I respect ERC Chair Rodolfo Albano Jr., I'm standing by my source, who has been one of the most reliable all these months that I've been in the energy beat. I asked him again about his statement and he stuck to it. He has acknowledged the issuance of the show cause order.

—ABIGAIL L. HO,
PDI reporter

Correcting PCIJ

THIS refers to the news article "This developer burns money and cuts trees" written by Luz Rimban of the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ), which was published in the Feb. 2 issue of the INQUIRER

Rimban in her article, wrote that the Madrigal family built its fortunes on logging. The said statement is malicious, baseless and unfair. Our family has not been involved in logging since the 1960s; and our logging concession was in Surigao; it was issued as a concession to then President Quezon who requested my grandfather to help the national economy in the 1930s. We were never involved in logging in any other province. Furthermore, we disengaged from the logging industry in the 1960s before the onset of the particularly ruthless and widespread logging activities of the 1970s and 1980s, the effects of which are being felt today.

For the record, our family's fortune was built on coal, shipping and real estate and not on logging as directly stated in the article. We were never involved in any questionable businesses.

We trust that the said statement will be appropriately rectified in the interest of the truth. Similar statements, imputing dishonor and prejudicing our family's name, were the reason why we have filed a libel case against the environment secretary.

—SEN. JAMBY MADRIGAL

Ego trip

READING the column of former Justice Isagani A. Cruz, "Titles for self-esteem," (PDI, 1/23/05) reminds me of an incident in a meeting I attended some years back. Addressed in the usual manner of "Mister," a lawyer who was present stood up and corrected me by saying that he should be addressed as "Attorney." I asked the man beside me if there was anything wrong in addressing a professional "Mister." He replied that, perhaps, the lawyer spent a lot to earn that title.

Years later, I observed that while senators avoid prefixing their names with "Honorable," barangay captains are sporting the word on their names. The barangay *kagawads* have followed suit, attaching the word to their names even on streamers and in publications. I could hardly believe that a friend of mine, who is a law graduate, wanted to be addressed as "Attorney" even though he could hardly speak correct English.

On the other hand, a CPA-lawyer is so humble that he signs documents and financial statements without using "Attorney" before his name or "CPA" after it.

—GODOFREDO O. PETEZA SR.,
JP Rizal Street,
Barangay Camambugan,
4600 Daet, Camarines Norte

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Sergia Oafericua	P 6,000.00	Marulas, Valenzuela City
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Dante Ampoan	Tanza, Cavite
Victor Lagazo	San Jose Occidental Mindoro
Jovito Libron	Mapagong, Calamba City
Emmanuel Borja	Quebiawan City of San Fernando
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Alex Torres	Punta Macabalan, Cagayan de Oro City
Janet Villafuerte	Sta.Cruz San Antonio, Nueva Ecija
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Lapid son snubs House quarry probe

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Gov. Mark Lapid said he would not appear in today's congressional hearing on sand revenues in Pampanga. He told the INQUIRER he had to honor previous commitments.

Provincial Administrator Fidel Arcenas, in a separate interview, said he was representing the governor in the hearing, the first on the issue by the House committee on natural resources.

Arcenas said Agusan del Norte Rep. Leovigildo Banaag, the committee chair, allowed Lapid to send his representative.

Banaag also invited Vice Gov. Joseller Guiao and Sangguniang Panlalawigan members.

Pampanga Representatives Francis Nepomuceno, Juan Miguel Arroyo and Anna York Bondoc were also asked to attend, according to Pampanga Rep. Reynaldo Aquino who filed Resolution 267.

The resolution sought an inquiry into the "income generating prospects of the Pampanga quarry industry."

It was filed in November or more than two months before retired Lt. Gen. Victor Corpus, chair of the state-owned Natural Resources Development Corp., asked the provincial board last Jan. 17 to make his agency the capitol's collecting arm of revenues from Mt. Pinatubo's sand and use some of it for the national government's reforestation program.

The proposal of Corpus as well as earlier exposés by Guiao revived the controversy over alleged collection irregularities under former governor and now Sen. Manuel "Lito" Lapid from 1995 to June 2004.

Governor Lapid, 25, took over the quarry task force in July last year.

The NRDC, which took over the quarry industry on the strength of Proclamation No. 66 of ousted President Joseph Estrada, grossed P145.2 million in 1999, P132.6 million in 2000 and P104.8 million in 2001.

The treasurer's office reported P24.3 million in 2002, P10.3 million in 2003 and P10.5 million in 2004.

The agencies collected P300 for every truckload of sand hauled out of Pampanga.

The discrepancy amounted to at least P337.4 million as of last year, Guiao said, citing data from official documents.

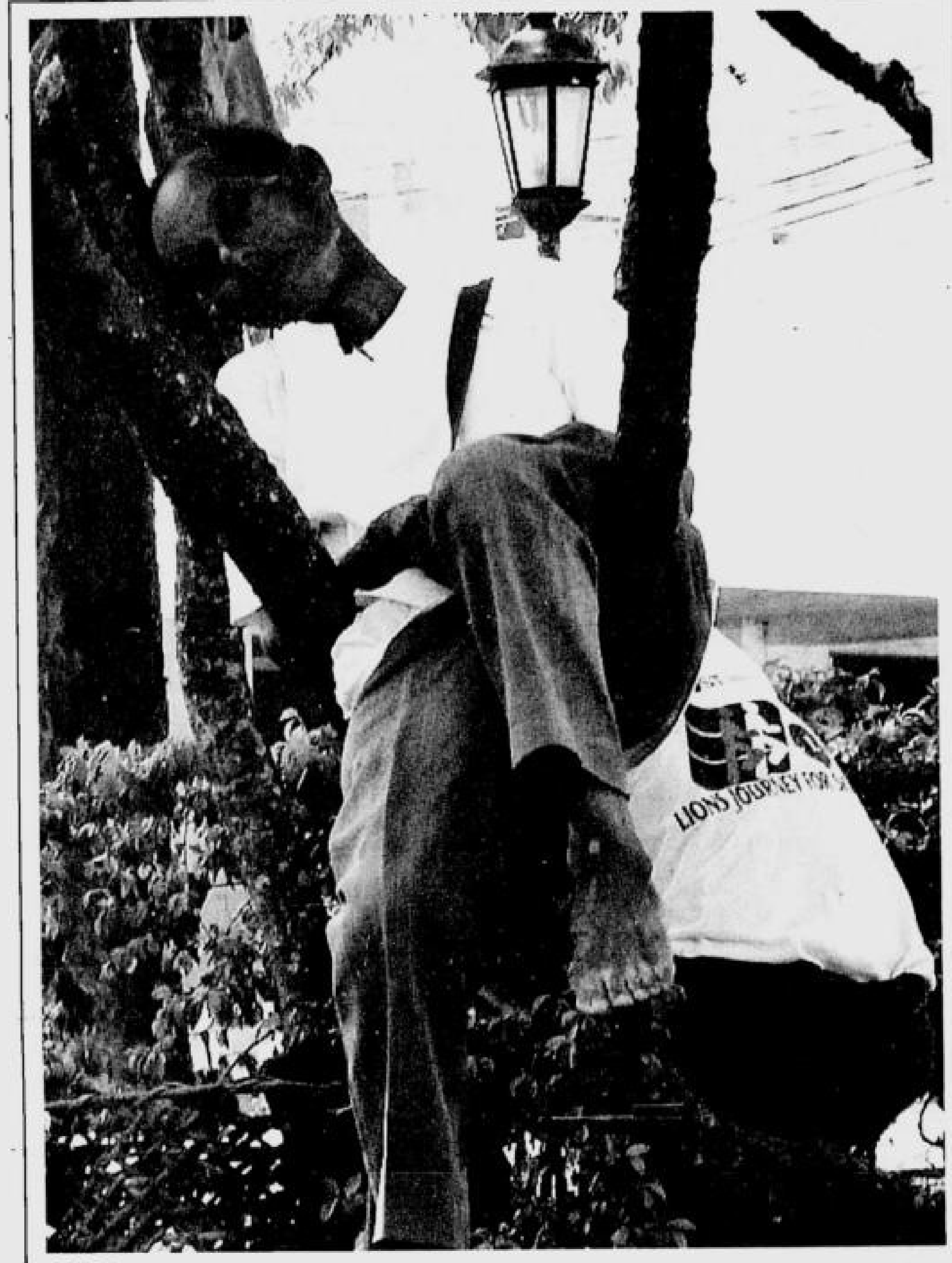
Guiao said the Lapids should explain to the committee the cause of the "sudden drop" in collections.

In a privilege speech on Jan. 24, Guiao called the alleged corruption by the Lapids as running in the "magnitude of plunder."

Senator Lapid said those were unearned income while his son called them "imaginary figures."

Arcenas traced the reduction in collections to the decline in the construction industry's demand for sand.

In an earlier interview, Senator Lapid said he did "not want to dignify the intrigues (by Guiao)." *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*



NAP

BING GONZALES/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

A man finds these branches of a tree at the Centennial Park in Davao City a good place to rest as a city worker prunes plants nearby.

Illegal land titles found in public forests

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Several illegal land titling cases inside public forests had been discovered as personnel of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources marked the forest boundaries of Bataan, Zambales, Bulacan and Nueva Ecija, the INQUIRER learned.

Ricardo Calderon, DENR forestry chief in Central Luzon, said all the cases were being verified and investigated. Some cases involved large landowners, especially in Bataan, he said.

Calderon said they were studying the possible involvement of local DENR officials in these cases. Unapproved land classification surveys were used in obtaining areas in public forests, he said.

So far, the DENR has installed at least 1,595 concrete markers along 2,000 km of forest lands in Nueva Ecija and Bulacan, which straddle the Sierra Madre mountain range east of Central Luzon, and Zambales on the west of the region.

These were in the list of 31 provinces prioritized for the delineation program, a "defensive forest front" that Calderon likened to the Great Wall of China.

The program seeks to define at least 3,800 km of forest land in the three provinces and in Aurora and the neighboring provinces of Bataan, Pampanga and Tarlac until 2008, according to DENR Regional Executive Director Regidor de Leon, in a report to Environment Secretary Michael Defensor.

The delineation, De Leon said, was "part of government's strategy" to manage the country's remaining forests, which stood at only seven million hectares.

De Leon said the program, which costs P44 million, started in the region in 2000 and was undertaken by the land evaluation party of the forest management division.

Using the Philippine reference system that employed satellite imagery, forestry personnel defined the boundaries by installing concrete markers at an interval of 1 km each.

Geographical coordinates are written on the markers, which are 7 feet tall. In between, at least 4,785 smaller markers were put up at a 250-meter interval each.

De Leon told Defensor that the absence of definite boundaries have opened the forests to squatting, fake titling and illegal logging.

According to Calderon, more than half of 963,120 hectares of forest in Central Luzon had been demarcated since 2000 when the forests survey began.

"Once we have clearly marked our forests, the government can now channel its resources in forest protection and conservation," he said in a separate statement. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Customs post proves too juicy for execs

SAN FERNANDO CITY—Two officials are contesting the post of district collector of the Bureau of Customs in the Ilocos as the acting district collector who was replaced last year insisted she was the "court-recognized collector who has the sole authority to act on customs matters."

In a memorandum she issued on Monday to customs employees here, Alberta Iglesias, acting San Fernando port district collector, said a resolution or temporary restraining order issued on Feb. 3 by the Court of Appeals was "merely a ploy to create chaos at this port."

The memorandum was also sent by fax to all the customs offices in Laoag City and Currimao in Ilocos Norte; Salomague in Cabugao, Ilocos Sur; Sual, Pangasinan; and Aparri, Cagayan.

Iglesias, in her memorandum, said the appellate court's TRO had no bearing on a writ of preliminary injunction issued by the regional trial court here.

She asked lawyer Juan Tan, the incumbent district collector, not to exercise his functions as district collector.

"It is clear that I am the recognized district collector," she said in her memo, quoting the Jan. 25 writ issued by Judge Adolfo Alagar.

Iglesias was reinstated in December after serving a six-month preventive suspension by the Ombudsman. But a subsequent memorandum issued by outgoing Customs Commissioner George Jereos asked her to maintain status quo and resume her regular position as deputy collector. *Peter La. Julian, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Diggings pit treasure hunter vs villagers in Capiz barangay

By Felipe V. Celino
PDI Visayas Bureau

ROXAS CITY—A treasure hunter has been accused of putting in danger the lives of residents of a village after he started excavating a creek in Sitio Agubanga, Barangay Dulangan in Pilar, Capiz.

Porferio Perez, Dulangan village chief, said the excavation, which has reached 25-feet deep, posed grave danger to residents should water from the mountains flow to the excavation area.

Perez, a former mayor of Pilar town, said he has already reported the excavation being undertaken by Andres Leonor, who had identified himself as district coordinator of the Treasure Hunters Association of the Philippines Inc. (THAPI).

A heated confrontation ensued between Dulangan barangay officials and Leonor on Monday at the excavation site and only the presence of policemen from the 1st Police Mobile Group pre-empted a bloody confrontation.

The excavation activities had permission from landowner Rafael Santos II, Leonor told reporters here who were present during the confrontation on Monday.

Leonor insisted there was no need to secure permits from the officials of Dulangan and Pilar because he had already permits from the landowner. He, however, admitted that he has not obtained an Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Leonor showed to barangay officials and reporters a map and a piece of document from Santos that supposedly proved that the excavation site had hidden treasures left by the Japanese.

He claimed that the Japanese Imperial Army used the area as a camp during World War II. He would not say what kind of treasures were supposed to be hidden in the area.

Erosion alert up in South Cotabato

KORONADAL CITY—Environment officials here have sounded the alarm on massive soil erosion in at least seven towns of South Cotabato.

Geronimo Sequito, community environment and natural resources officer, said they were closely monitoring the towns of Tampakan, Banga, Polomolok, Tiboli, Tantangan, Tupi, and Lake Sebu. He said these towns need to be rehabilitated immediately to protect forest cover and wildlife.

The towns, he said, are among the 50 towns in Central Mindanao identified by the Regional Physical Framework Plan for 2004-2030 of the Regional Development Council as prone to soil erosion.

Sequito said rehabilitation and reforestation plans are underway to prevent erosion after South Cotabato Gov. Daisy Avance-Fuentes, who also heads the development council, issued an executive order urging local chief executives of the seven towns to act on the problem.

A National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) report showed that half of the towns in Central Mindanao are experiencing moderate to severe soil erosion. This, the Neda report said, could obstruct the economic growth of the region.

Soil erosion is caused by lack of trees.

In Sarangani, at least six of the seven towns are also considered erosion-prone. These are the capital town of Alabel, Maasim, Glan, Malungon, Malapatan and Maitum.

At least eight towns in Sultan Kudarat are also prone to soil erosion. These are the towns of Isulan, Lutayan, Lebak, Bagumbayan, Columbio, Esperanza, Kalamansig and Senator Ninoy Aquino.

Sequito said community reforestation and rehabilitation programs in the 10 towns and a city of South Cotabato are being implemented by local government units.

He also stressed that the implementation of a total log ban in the remaining virgin forest of Central Mindanao until 2030 can also help stop the erosion.

Jeffrey Tupas, PDI Mindanao Bureau

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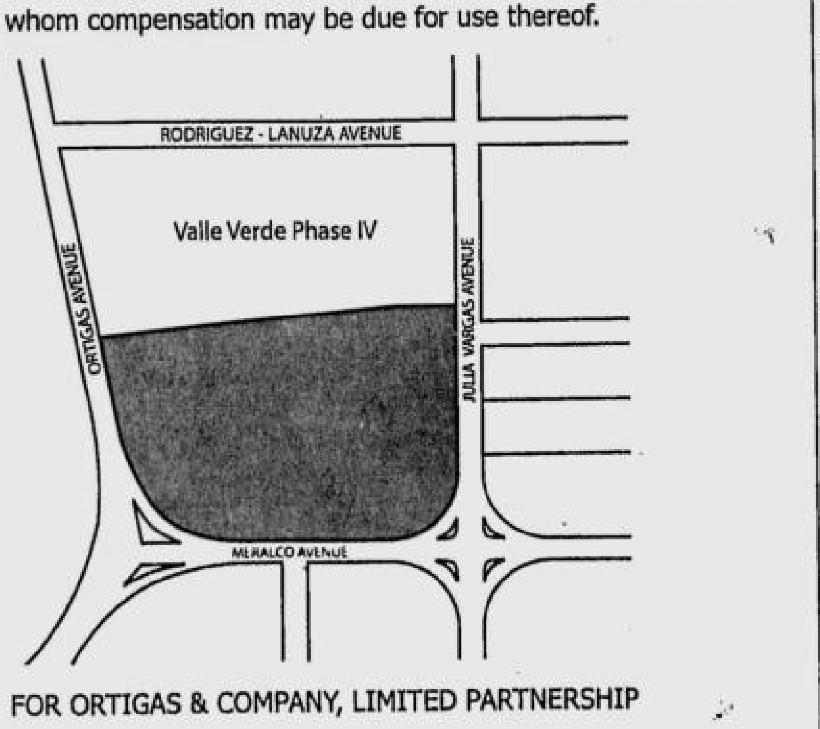

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Jobless youth told: Try medical transcription

By Alex Pal
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—A former senator and labor leader advised millions of jobless college graduates to try their lucks at medical transcription, which, he said, is emerging as the biggest market for jobs in the country.

Ernesto Herrera, former senator and head of the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines, said "there is a huge business opportunity for medical transcription in the Philippines."

"We have a golden opportunity to provide stable, well-paying jobs to millions of unemployed Filipinos and they don't even have to leave the country," he said in a press statement.

Herrera gave this piece of advice as an entrepreneur in Dumaguete City took the lead in opening a medical transcription company.

Victor Vicente Sinco, a former Hawaii-based architect, opened the Entheos Information Technology Inc. after learning about the high-speed fiber optic network in Negros Oriental, which is ideal for IT-based industries.

The opening of Entheos Information Technology Inc. is seen as a big boost to efforts of the provincial government to position Negros Oriental as an investment center for IT industries.

Entheos is now training students in the medical field and graduates who could work for the global market starting April.

"This is a good opportunity for us to generate jobs for people in the nursing and allied medical field as they wait for about two years to get jobs abroad," Sinco said.

In his statement, Herrera said a medical transcriptionist is someone who transforms medical reports dictated by medical professionals into written forms, which would then be printed as hard copy or stored in a computer system.

"Doctors . . . for instance, tape patient information on Dictaphones which are then transcribed for documentation. These records are used for purposes of archive reference or for serving as legal proof of medical advice," said the statement.

He quoted the Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions (Citem) of the Department of Trade and Industry as saying the entire American medical transcription market alone is worth at least $25 billion, with some $5 billion of that market being made available to the Philippines and India.

Sinco said his firm, Entheos, will do medical transcription for some US hospitals. This week, they are training a batch of applicants who are graduates in biology, physical therapy, nursing and medical technology.

Sinco has also placed recruitment ads in Cebu newspapers. Preferred applicants are students or graduates of nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, biology, medical technology, and allied medical courses who have a working knowledge of medical terms.

Rolo Cena, Entheos manager and training officer, said they are working to improve the listening skills of all prospective regular employees.

The main job of these medical transcribers is to convert doctors' taped audio reports or digitized audio downloads and sound files into written form.

Other parts of the training include understanding foreign accents and colloquialisms, encoding speed to the required 400 lines of text per hour, accuracy of the transcription, and the use of specific medical transcription software when submitting electronic files to companies abroad.

Sinco said he hopes to start with 50 seats and maybe expand as the volume of work increases.

There are more than 30 medical transcription companies in Manila, and two in Cebu City. "But the job load from abroad is just immense, the industry cannot cope with the demand," said Sinco.

The P7 million high investment venture in medical transcription normally gets its return of investment in about 18 months.

"Medical transcription in the Philippines is a high-pressure kind of business where '*pwede na*' cannot be good enough especially since we're dealing with a global market," Sinco said.

Cops kill 4 car theft suspects in Pampanga

SAN SIMON, Pampanga—Four suspected car thieves were killed in a gunfight with Traffic Management Group agents here early yesterday, police said.

Police said the four men were in a stolen Toyota Tamaraw FX. TMG agents saw the vehicle in Meycauayan, Bulacan.

When TMG agents flagged it down in Barangay Sta. Monica in San Simon at about 10:45 a.m., the suspects put up a fight, police said.

Investigators found two Carbine rifles and two .38 cal. revolvers inside the vehicle.

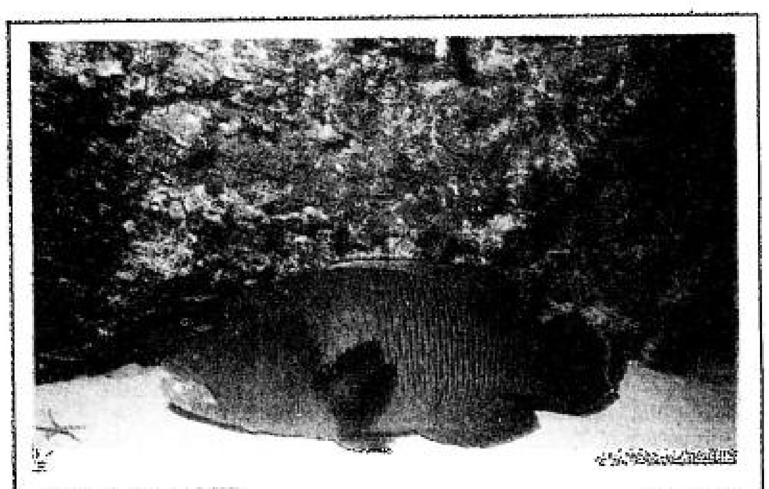
Supt. Eleuterio Gutierrez, Central Luzon TMG chief, said the identities of the suspects, who were in their 30s and 40s, were still being checked. The bodies were taken to the Torno Funeral Parlor in the City of San Fernando.

But a resident in Barangay Sta. Monica told the INQUIRER that the suspects did not put up a fight. The source also said the clash, which occurred behind a steel melting plant in the same village, happened at about 1:15 p.m., not in the morning, as the police claimed.

In Bulacan, five members of a gun-for-hire gang operating in Bulacan and Nueva Ecija were arrested by members of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Team and the Bulacan police during a raid in San Miguel town on Tuesday.

Chief Insp. Nolasco Bathan, CIDT chief, identified the suspects as Reno Legaspi, 41, the suspected leader of the gang; Alvin Legaspi, 31; Roberto de la Cruz, 31; Leonidez Cheneco, 30; and Edgardo Cheneco, 24.

The police seized two M-16 Armalite rifles, a .45 cal. pistol, a mortar, a 22 cal. rifle and bullets. *Tonette Orejas with a report from Carmela Reyes, Central Luzon Desk*


ENDANGERED YVETTE LEE

Mameng (Humphead Wrasse), a kind of fish favored in many restaurants, was recently listed in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (Cites) as an endangered species. The catching and trading of this fish is now banned and carries a penalty of imprisonment and P120,000 in fine. *Mameng* is sold for as much as $100 per kilogram in Hong Kong and more if it is alive.

Senate body to probe PNP recruitment scam

COTABATO CITY—A town mayor's complaint has prompted the Senate to investigate reports that recruits are being made to pay to assure them of admission in the police force.

The chair of the Senate police and public order committee said his committee has received complaints similar to that aired by Mayor Tocao Mastura of Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao.

Mastura complained that the men he recommended for admission into the police force were made to pay at least P100,000 each to ensure their enlistment.

Sen. Manuel Villar said mayors of Kalibo, Aklan have aired the same complaint.

"That's why my committee wants it investigated to find out the truth and the extent of the alleged anomaly in the PNP recruitment system," he said.

But hearings on the 2005 national budget delayed the investigation, he added.

He said the committee has summoned Director General Edgardo Aglipay, Philippine National Police chief; Senior Supt. Sukarno Ikbala, PNP ARMM police chief; and National Police Commission (Napolcom) officials.

Mastura complained particularly of Mamerto Amadeo, ARMM Napolcom director, whom the mayor accused of swearing in police recruits who failed in tests but paid the fees.

The mayor said he was ready to present applicants who would testify that they were victims of the recruitment scam.

Villar said he would also require the Napolcom to submit an investigation report on Mastura's complaint.

Amadeo, regional vice chair of the Napolcom's police screening and promotions board, repeatedly denied Mastura's allegations, saying he was willing to be investigated.

Mastura said the case should be brought to court "to end once and for all this irregularity in the police force." *Charlie Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Gunmen kill Batangas cop

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Two unidentified gunmen shot and killed a Batangas policeman and wounded the victim's five-year-old niece in an ambush in Barangay San Sebastian, Lipa City yesterday morning.

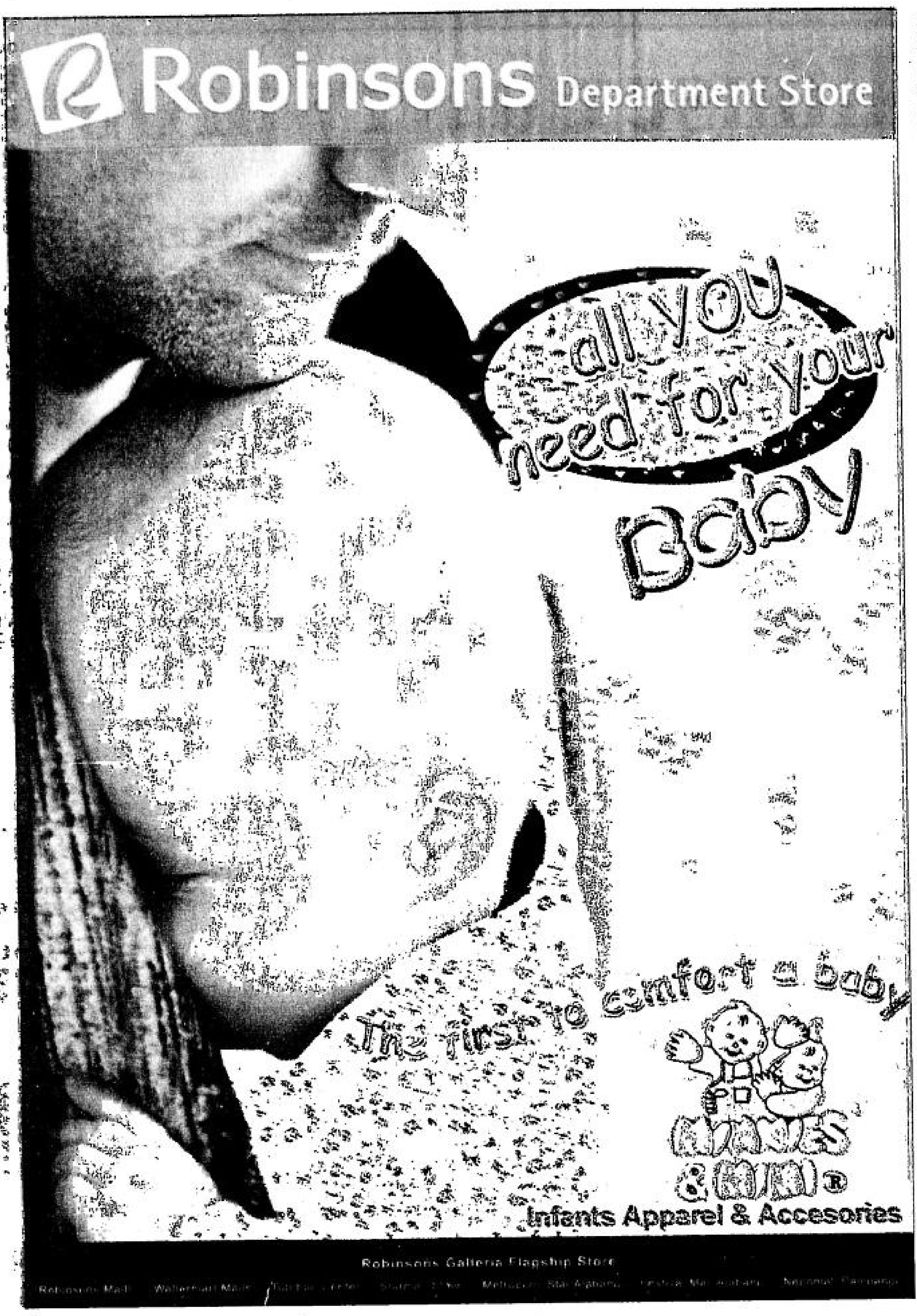
Director Oscar Calderon, Calabarzon police director, identified the victim as SPO1 Romulo Sabillo, a member of the Lipa City police office.

He said the victim was driving his jeep with his niece, Patricia Aquino, at around 8 a.m. when the suspects appeared from nowhere and shot him several times in the body.

After the shooting, he said, the suspects immediately boarded a red van bearing a "For Registration" plate and fled, heading south.

Calderon said Sabillo was declared dead on arrival at the nearby Mediatrix Hospital after suffering at least eight gunshot wounds while his niece survived superficial wounds.

He said police have yet to determine the motive for the killing. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*



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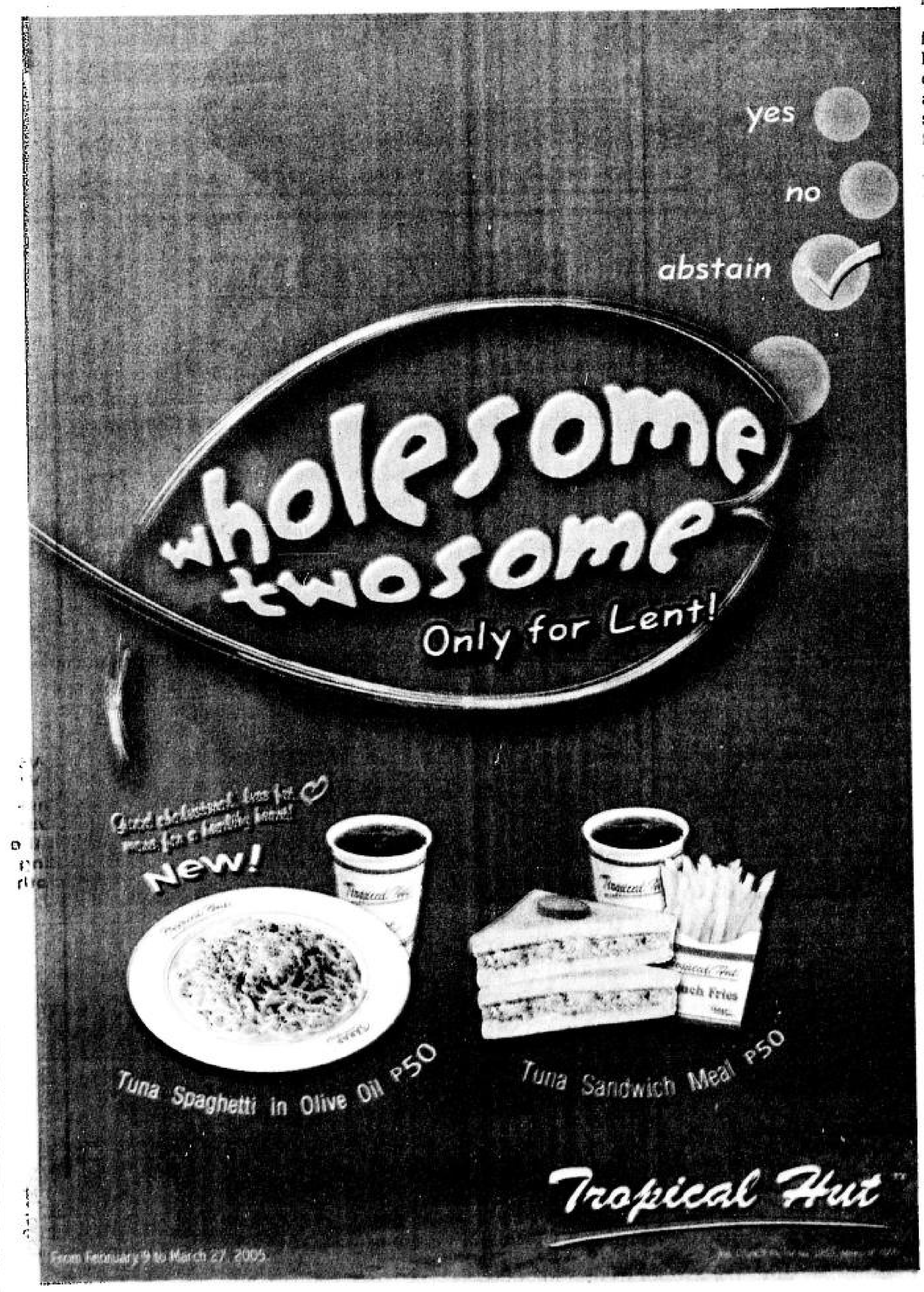

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INQUIRER Northern Luzon

Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Rolando B. Fernandez

Artists pollinate flower festival

By Frank Cimatu
Baguio City

FILMMAKER Kidlat Tahimik is the first to admit that he leaves town whenever the Panagbenga or the Baguio flower festival is in full bloom.

For one, there are too many people. Second, the festival has been too commercial, down to the dozens of stalls selling hot dogs. And third, Baguio artists like Kidlat have nothing to do with Panagbenga despite their strong presence.

This year, however, Kidlat is stuck with the event.

Sweet karma struck Kidlat when Mayor Braulio Yaranon decided that the annual flower festival should be run by private entities and designated the filmmaker as its co-chair. When his co-chair quit, Kidlat was the last man standing. Joining him is the fiercely independent-minded Nelia Cid, who acts as treasurer.

That is why these days, Kidlat's favorite coat has a lightning embroidered on its back. He has become the lightning rod.

He also asked people to stop calling him "chairman" but rather "curator" of the festival events.

When asked for a motto, he decided on "Balik Bulaklak," which is simplistic enough but given the successes of the past Panagbenga editions, the emphasis was more on logistics than on flowers.

The committee members decided that the festival should be community-driven and community-centered. Activities have been dispersed in different parks of the city other than Burnham Park. The Pony Boys' Day on March 5 has been set at Wright Park, for example.

Session Road has been declared commercial billboard-free zone.

"Let us not make the city the Fallujah of giant telecoms (telecommunication companies)," Tahimik said.

Streamer war

He cited the festivals in Boracay where even the sails of bancas bore the familiar telecom icons. Festivals all over the country, for that matter, had been the battleground of these companies, prompting Baguio residents and sympathizers during last year's Panagbenga to start an online petition against the billboard and streamer wars.

Instead of the "20,000 telephone-booth size stores," as Tahimik described them, Session will be transformed into the "crown jewel" of the festival.

VINCENT CABREZA

ARTIST EV Espiritu prepares one of the "meningo masks" for the Baguio flower festival. The masks are meant to exorcise the deadly meningococcemia bacteria that affected the city recently.

The road will be closed from Feb. 28 to March 6, and during this period, huge flower-shaped tents will shield street cafes that will carry themes based on music genré, such as rock, jazz and classical.

In typical Kidlat style, the event is known as "Flo. R.I.S.T—Lakad Na" or "The Flowers 'R' in Session—Tayo Lakad Na." The "market encounter" has been renamed "FX" or "Flower Expression" and it will be held at the city orchidarium.

Nearby Harrison Road has been designated as "street mall" and will be closed during the same period. The giant telecom firms will stage their sponsored concerts in different venues. Local bands will have the chance to strut their stuff during the "Bulaklak Rock" and "Tugtog at Chibog."

Theater artist Lynette Carantes-Bibal has been named organizer of the Children's Week. *(See story below)*.

Last year, the street dancing parade was rained out and yet the schoolchildren went on with their routines, causing some parents to storm City Hall.

No parading children

To avoid a similar controversy, the festival's executive committee decided to bar elementary school children from joining the parade on Feb. 26. Only high school and college students will be attending.

Instead, "Bata't Bulaklak" has been scheduled for Feb. 28-March 2 at the Burnham Park. Art and storytelling workshops will be held for the young, including street children and school dropouts.

Another theater artist, Ferdie John Balanag, has organized the Pitik Festival on March 5 at Burnham's Dap-ay to give Panagbenga a Cordillera flavor. Highlights will be the *tapuy* (rice wine) brewing and woodcarving contests.

The 108 gongs (to signify eternity) will be reprised by schoolchildren in g-string and *gangsa* (Cordillera gongs) dancing in one line.

Mask maker EV Espiritu will have his theater group, Tropang Paltok, dancing on the streets, wearing "meningo masks" to exorcise the deadly meningococcemia bacteria that hounded the city recently.

Local artists, like Kawayan de Guia, Leonard Aguinaldo, Norman Adefuin and Jenni Dimalanta, have designed posters and T-shirts.

Finally, after 10 years, Panagbenga has been taken over by the artists.

This time, children take center stage

CHILDREN and flowers give Baguio City something to smile and be proud about.

Last year, schoolchildren participating in the street dancing parade made the Baguio flower festival shine, though the rains drenched parade participants and spectators.

This year's organizers, however, made sure that the children would be protected from uncooperative weather by withdrawing their participation in the street dancing parade. Instead, they set aside a special program for them under the theme "Cherish the Children."

Lynette Carantes-Bibal, head of the children's committee, said she wanted to nurture children's minds and skills as seeds are nurtured until they bloom as flowers.

The program would show the children how important they were to the festival, now on its 10th year, she said. "We want to let [the children] know that Panagbenga is not only for the government, or for the business or social sectors, or for a few individuals. It is also a celebration for them and the celebration of our hopes in them," she said.

She said the street dancing parade inculcated the competitive spirit rather than stimulate the creative process among children.

From Feb. 28 to March 2, the children will be treated to various workshops and creative activities at the Melvin Jones in Burnham Park.

Bibal said on Feb. 28, workshop on performance art, visual art, installation art, and ethnic or indigenous music will be held under the guidance of local artists.

On March 1, programs that will involve the children and their families will be held. Among these are storytelling, painting, poetry writing and flower arrangements.

On that day, the children will be asked to help local artists in creating a giant floral mandala or mosaic at the Melvin Jones grandstand. The children will recycle the flowers used by street dancers and parade floats for the mandala.

On March 2, the drum and lyre bands competition and field demonstrations and dance contests will be held. To cap the activities, the children will release lighted paper balloons. *Donna Demetillo*

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AN ATTACK helicopter takes off from the Jolo airport Tuesday on a combat mission against Moro rebels as fighting rages for a second day. AFP

17 soldiers, 30 Misuari followers killed in Sulu

From page A1

ple with a bomb on a passenger ferry in February 2004.

The clashes occurred while the government was preparing to resume peace negotiations with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), the biggest separatist group now operating in Mindanao.

The peace talks, being brokered by Malaysia, are to resume some time this month in Kuala Lumpur.

Expecting more clashes, the Philippine National Police yesterday placed the entire Western Mindanao Command on heightened alert.

Police also secured government facilities and other vital installations.

"We will see to it that there will be no disruptive violence spilling over in Zamboanga City in the form of bombing and attacks similar to Ipil and Siocon or any other possible diversionary enemy combat action outside Sulu," said Director Vidal Querol, Western Mindanao Command chief.

Up to 600 Marines sailed from Zamboanga City to reinforce troops on Jolo.

They were to reinforce about 3,000 soldiers battling hundreds of gunmen from the Abu Sayyaf, a small group linked to al-Qaida, and renegade MNLF members.

Death of civilians

The fighting erupted on Monday when Misuari's followers attacked Army posts in Panamao.

The attack was triggered by the death of three civilians, including 14-year-old Aldasir Padiwan, on Feb. 1 during clashes between government forces and the Abu Sayyaf bandits, two ranking military officials said.

"The honest truth here is that the [death of the three civilians] have infuriated the [Misuari Breakaway Group]," said Brig. Gen. Nelson Allaga, acting commander of the Marine Forces-South.

Brig. Gen. Gabriel Habacon, chief of the Army's 1st Infantry Division, said that the death of the civilians had worsened the anger of the MNLF members under Ustadz Habier Malik.

Motive behind attacks

Braganza said the attackers belonging to the so-called Misuari Breakaway Group (MBG) might have other motives.

"We have information that the supporters of former chair Nur Misuari wanted the transfer of his detention to Sulu," Braganza said in a radio interview. "They are trying to pressure the government to give in to their demands."

Misuari, facing rebellion charges, is being held at a police camp in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

MISUARI VAL HANDUMON

The clashes broke out in Panamao and in Barangay Pansul in Patikul town, and other areas.

Tension still high

A barangay councilor of Siit was wounded during the fighting.

"It's unfortunate that the [Feb. 1] operation in Mount Karawan against the Abu Sayyaf under Doktor Abu hit some MBG in the process," Braganza said.

As of press time, tension was still high in the affected areas as the MNLF members had yet to withdraw.

"We cannot extricate yet the casualties there," Allaga said.

At least 14 soldiers have been wounded in the clashes.

Hospital retaken

In Monday's fighting, about 300 of Misuari's followers either encircled or occupied an Army company detachment in Panamao's Siit village and entered a nearby hospital, which has since been retaken by Army troops, military officials said.

In the single-biggest loss incurred by the military, 13 Marines were killed and 14 others were wounded in an ambush of a military reinforcement contingent on Monday in Patikul, near Panamao, the military said.

The military vowed to go all-out against the attackers.

"The ASG and MBG are terrorists and the [military] troopers, Muslims and Christians, will pursue them until justice is served," Lt. Col. Buenaventura Pascual, military information officer, told reporters. *Reports from Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau; Christian V. Esguerra in Manila; AP and Reuters*

Scrap peace talks, Abu spokesman urges MILF

By Christian Esguerra

ABU SAYYAF'S self-proclaimed spokesperson, Abu Solaiman, yesterday urged the Moro Islamic Liberation Front to abandon its peace negotiations with the government.

"To our brothers in the MILF, don't waive our nation's honor, dignity and right even in exchange for the whole world," Solaiman said in a statement he read in a morning radio interview.

Peace talks in KL

The government and the MILF are to resume off-and-on peace negotiations in Kuala Lumpur this month.

"No amount of development can pay for our homeland's illegal and immoral occupation or annexation," Solaiman said from an undisclosed place.

Instead of pursuing a peace agreement, the MILF should join forces with Misuari's Moro National Liberation Front in fighting the "enemies of Islam," he said.

'Victory or martyrdom'

"Continue the struggle until we attain either of the two, victory or martyrdom," Solaiman said, addressing the ASG, Misuari Breakaway Group and MILF fighters.

Soliman added: "Our latest series of offensive military actions against the enemies of Islam in Sulu, together with some remnants of the MNLF, is our response to the government's treacherous ways of dealing with our MILF brothers in Central Mindanao, just like what they have done to the MNLF before."

The fighting on Jolo has been the most intense in recent months and reflected the fragility of peace in the volatile southern Philippines.

Sporadic US-backed military offensives in recent years have whittled down the strength of the al-Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf, leaving them largely on the run on Jolo and nearby provinces.

Catholic Chinoys can still toast the New Year

From page A1

that comes with the start of the 40-day Lenten season, which starts today.

The Hong Kong model

CBCP secretary general Msgr. Hernando Coronel said the bishops were free to give dispensations, or exemptions, from fasting and abstinence from meat.

Coronel cited the case of Hong Kong, where the Catholic Chinese decided to fast and abstain on another day because they wanted to enjoy their New Year to the hilt.

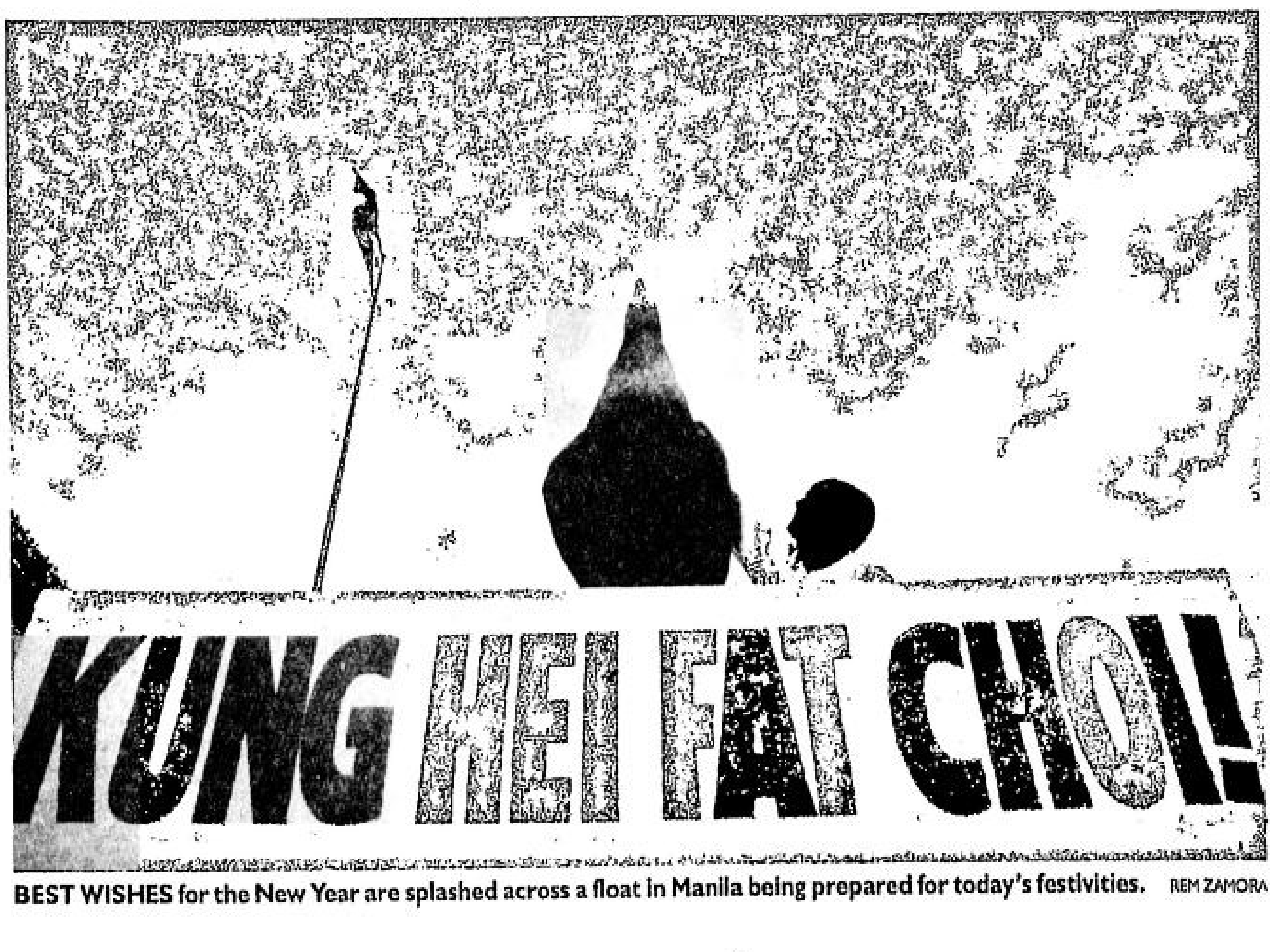
Coronel said bishops had the discretion to grant a dispensation from practices that are according to Church discipline, but not from laws that are from God, such as the 10 Commandments.

Substitute charity work

"The CBCP has Chinese-Filipino apostolates all over the Philippines… In the Philippines, we can dispense them from fasting, but they have to substitute with works of charity, works of love, good deeds. The important thing is we cannot impose," Coronel told reporters at the CBCP.

Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales, on the other hand, called for sacrifice during the Lenten season with a "spirit of prayer and generosity to take on sacrifice and the discipline of self."

"The Lenten season is the closest most of us Christians can make the spiritual exercise… This time of Lent, let us pray and care for one another," Rosales said.



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So, is Marcos money intact? And where is it?

From page A1

wealth be spent on land reform, is amended.

In 1998, the Marcos assets were transferred from Swiss banks to an escrow account in Philippine National Bank.

The Supreme Court had ruled that the money was ill-gotten and forfeited it in favor of the government.

Bureau of Treasury

In March 2004, then Agrarian Reform Secretary Jose Marie Ponce announced that $624 million of the amount was already with the Bureau of Treasury and was to be used for land reform.

"Even the amounts are deceiving," Mariano said. "$683 million was transferred to PNB. When it goes to the Bureau of Treasury, it was already reduced to $624 million."

Mariano said he had reason to believe the money did not go to land reform at all.

He said an agreement dated Jan. 30, 2004, was entered into by the Bureau of Treasury then headed by Eduardo Sergio Edeza with the PNB, whose Trust Banking Group was appointed custodian of the funds.

However, the agreement was terminated in March of the same year, said Mina Figueroa, the new national treasurer.

Bank in Singapore

PNB president Lorenzo Tan said the money was "handed to the national treasury already except for some funds stuck with West LB Singapore."

Marilen Sarmiento, head of the PNB trust department, said about $25 million was still with West LB Singapore because of an interpleader case. When PNB was withdrawing the money, West LB decided to leave to a Singaporean court the decision to identify the parties entitled to the fund. Others are claiming it.

$30-M retention fund

Sarmiento said there was also $30 million to $35 million in a retention fund. Under the escrow agreement, the amount is for whatever litigation expenses that will be incurred.

Once the case is settled, the remaining funds will be given back to the national treasury, she said.

House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles was quick to defend Malacañang from charges that it was shortchanging victims of human rights abuses of their rightful compensation.

Nograles chided Sen. Joker Arroyo for insinuating that P3 billion of the promised P11 billion ($200 million) to be given the victims was missing just because Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye had erred in saying that the amount promised was P8 billion.

Nograles said the President had shown resolve to compensate the victims.

Compensation bill

"We cannot just take the money out of an ATM machine. But Senator Joker knows that the Arroyo administration is committed to compensate the human rights victims for the brutality suffered under Marcos," he said.

Bacolod City Rep. Monico Puentevella assured members of Congress, some of whom were also victims of human rights violations during martial law, that a compensation bill, now on second reading, would be passed by Congress.

Puentevella agreed that the indemnification of victims was a "necessary part of the justice that they have been seeking."

Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman said claimants would not be left with an empty bag following the decision of a United States appeals court upholding the Philippine Supreme Court's ruling forfeiting the Marcos money to the government.

Lagman said the victims' right to compensation was guaranteed by the Constitution in the Bill of Rights and in the article prescribing the powers of the Commission on Human Rights.

Because these constitutional provisions are not self-implementing, there is a need for Congress to enact a law providing for compensation.

18 years later ...

The compensation bill, if enacted into law, will amend CARL, which provides that all recovered ill-gotten wealth of the Marcoses should go to land reform.

"What is inordinately traumatizing is 18 years after the expulsion of the Marcos dictatorship, justice still eludes thousands of *desaparecidos* (disappeared), torture victims, the maimed and the dead who fought the tyrant," Lagman said. ***Reports from Cynthia D. Balana and Juliet Labog-Javellana***

Bongbong: Not me but gov't duty to pay victims

From page A1

he's not legally obligated to pay his father's debts," Bongbong's attorney John Bartko said. "The Philippine government is responsible for providing the money."

Where is Marcos wealth?

Bongbong, through his lawyer, said he did not know where the assets from the Marcos estate were, and that he was cooperating with the court to try and locate them.

Sherry Broder, an attorney for the more than 9,500 victims, challenged the notion that Bongbong and his family, including former first lady Imelda Marcos, were unable to start paying the money to the victims.

"There are personal assets," Broder said. "Imelda Marcos rented a plane for $750,000 to fly back to the Philippines. She still lives a very glorious lifestyle."

Sharing the assets

Real is overseeing the distribution of the assets in a class-action lawsuit, whose plaintiffs won a $2-billion judgment against the Marcos estate in 1995. The award has grown through the years to $3.7 billion with interest.

The 9th US Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco on Friday rejected a request by the plaintiffs to recover the $683 million in Marcos assets that were transferred from a Swiss account to the Philippine government.

Last month, the appeals court upheld a previous ruling by Real freezing Marcos' assets being held in the Philippines and other banks around the world.

Those funds include $40 million that has been held in an escrow account because of competing claims of ownership by the Marcos estate, the Philippine government and the human rights victims.

New hearing

Attorneys for Arelma Corp., a Panamanian financial company set up by Marcos that originally held the $40 million, appealed that ruling.

Arguments in the appeal are to be heard before the 9th Circuit Court in March.

To date none of the torture victims has received any money.

Malacañang has said it is working to amend a law stipulating that Marcos assets should be used to finance the agrarian reform program, so that some of the money could be used to indemnify the martial law victims.

CARP will suffer

But Land Reform Secretary Rene Villa said yesterday that using the Marcos assets to compensate the victims would mean a reduced amount needed for paying for land to be acquired under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP).

Villa said he could only hope that the government would compensate for it by increasing the budget of the Department of Agrarian Reform.

Villa said an estimated P36 billion from the Marcos wealth had been allocated for land reform. While some of the amount has already been spent for CARP, more than P8 billion is still intact, he said.

Using CARP fund opposed

Rufino Geanga, spokesperson of the Sugar Workers Alliance-Negros, said there could be no justification for removing the funding support for CARP in favor of the victims of the Marcos regime.

"The indemnification of the victims of the amount due them at the expense of amending the CARP that is faulty and defective does not justify the social justice spirit of the law and can never be used as justification favoring the claimants," Geanga said.

"It will all the more create social unrest among agrarian reform beneficiaries who, at the same time, were victims of Marcos' martial law," he added.

Geanga said amending the CARP Law posed a big threat to legitimate agrarian reform beneficiaries.

Big landlords

He said it showed the "utter absence of political will of the Arroyo administration" which, he said, appeared to be prepared to succumb to the pressures of big landlords opposed to CARP.

"BONGBONG" Marcos Jr., governor of Ilocos Norte, greets the Honolulu community during a reception for him at the governor's mansion, in Honolulu, Tuesday. AP

"With three more years remaining to the 10-year extension of CARP ... the landlords identified with the government are exploiting all possibilities to reclaim ownership of lands, as opposed to the spirit of the CARP that we have long struggled for," he said.

Victims are heroes

The rights group Task Force Detainees of the Philippines, for its part, called on the government to apologize to the martial law victims, to declare them heroes, and compensate them with money from the national budget.

"We call for an official recognition of the human rights violations during the martial law regime of President Ferdinand Marcos through a presidential proclamation to negate the lingering effects of Proclamation 1081," said Aurora Parong, TFDP executive director.

The group said the official recognition could take the form of a national marker to the victims of the dictatorship.

Closing dark chapter

"It is high time that the government make an apology to the thousands of victims of martial law [because] the Philippine government allowed itself to be used for fascist repression and economic plunder," Parong said.

"This Congress must enact the compensation law which has been due for almost two decades already," Parong added. "Aside from recovered ill-gotten wealth, the compensation could come from the national budget."

Parang said: "Two decades after Edsa, we must close that dark past through recognition of the pains and courage of those who fought against the dictatorship, through restitution and compensation." ***With reports from Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau; Norman Bordadora in Manila, and AP***

Oops, it's P11B, not P8B, says Bunye

By Juliet labog-javellana

PRESS Secretary Ignacio Bunye yesterday corrected himself and said the amount President Macapagal-Arroyo had set aside to indemnify martial law victims was actually $200 million.

"President Macapagal-Arroyo had committed $200 million for human rights victims, and I stand corrected," Bunye said in a statement.

Ms Arroyo announced she was setting aside the amount for the claimants after the Supreme Court last year declared that the Marcos deposits were ill-gotten wealth and forfeited these in favor of the government.

The deposits have since grown to $683 million.

Bunye was responding to Sen. Joker Arroyo, who had taken him to task for saying the amount allocated for the victims was only P8 billion, when the amount actually included in the proposed budget was $200 million—or P11 billion.

Ms Arroyo has ordered the setting aside of $200 million pending an amendment to the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law, which mandates that all proceeds from recovered Marcos assets should go to agrarian reform.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, February 9, 2005
Ash Wednesday

1st Reading: **Joel 2:12-18**
2nd Reading: **2 Cor 5:20-6:2**
Gospel: **Matthew 6:1-6,16-18**

Jesus said to his disciples, "Be careful not to make a show of your righteousness before people. If you do so, you do not gain anything from your Father in heaven. When you give something to the poor, do not have it trumpeted before you, as do those who want to be seen in the synagogues and in the streets in order to be praised by the people. I assure you, they have been already paid in full.

If you give something to the poor, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your gift remains really secret. Your Father who sees what is kept secret, will reward you.

When you pray, do not be like those who want to be seen. They love to stand and pray in the synagogues or on street corners to be seen by everyone. I assure you, they have already been paid in full. When you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father who is with you in secret; and your Father who sees what is kept secret will reward you.

When you fast, do not put on a miserable face as do the hypocrites. They put on a gloomy face, so people can see they are fasting. I tell you this: they have been paid in full already. When you fast, wash your face and make yourself look cheerful, because you are not fasting for appearances or for people, but for your Father who sees beyond appearances. And your Father, who sees what is kept secret will reward you."

Commentary

The clarion call goes forth: Rend your hearts, not your garments. Fast, return to God who is gracious, compassionate. Our God relents—it's time for us to relent from evil, fast from injustice and superficial religion practiced for show or our own self-aggrandizement and the good impression of others. And the trumpet sounds the call to the whole community. We're in this together. There is to be no outward show of pious behaviors, fasting, long prayers in public, even others knowing if we give alms. This is about purity of intention and practice—we fast—the kind God wants of us in sharing our bread and justice with others, in almsgiving that protects those who receive and in prayer that rends our hearts before God, breaks our will and ego, bending us before our gracious Father who wants us to live in the freedom of the children of God—all of us, helping each other. This is the time of secrets between our God and us, in love. Father, help us to make this Lent a secret worth holding true between You who are Love and we who seek to love you back. Amen.

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PNOC - Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites interested contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the project:

WAREHOUSE RENTAL FOR OSD AND EDD
EDC04-155

The Approved Budget is P13,912,800.00 chargeable against PNOC-EDC fund. The contract duration is 2 years.

Application Forms for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be secured from the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group (c/o H.A Baldanzo) starting **February 2, 2005 upon** payment of a non-refundable fee of Pesos: Five Hundred (P500.00).

For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on **February 14, 2005, 2:00 p.m.** at the BAC Conference Room, First Floor Bldg. 5, PNOC-EDC, Fort Bonifacio.

Applications for Eligibility and sealed bids shall be received by the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group at PNOC-EDC, 1st floor Bldg. 5, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila, **not later than 2:00 p.m. on February 28, 2005** and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

PNOC - EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to abort the bidding process, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous to PNOC - EDC.

BAC CHAIRMAN

(PDI--Feb. 9, 2005)

De La Salle University
AKI
Angelo King Institute

The Family Business Studies Center (FBSC) of the DLSU-Angelo King Institute for Economic and Business Studies announces its seminar-workshops for March.

Managing the accounting function in SMEs

This seminar is designed not only for individuals handling the finances of small- and medium-scale enterprises, but also for business owners and functional managers whose effectiveness as decision-makers depends on their ability to understand how accounting systems are integrated to other organizational subsystems. Participants will be introduced to the basic processes in keeping / maintaining accounting / financial records to comply with sound accounting / financial management principles.

Venue: Century Park Hotel, 599 Pablo Ocampo St., Malate, Manila; **Date / Time:** March 4, Friday, 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Worforce management for SMEs

Understand the values, attitudes, and behavior of your employees, and learn various leadership and motivational approaches that could apply to a variety of business situations. This seminar is ideal for owners and managers of SMEs who would like to unleash the drive and creativity of their workforce as they strive to enhance business competitiveness.

Venue: Century Park Hotel, 599 Pablo Ocampo St., Malate, Manila; **Date/Time:** March 5, Saturday, 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Early bird offer / discounts
Discounts will be given to those who confirm their reservations not later than February 18, Friday. Additional discounts will be given to those who attend both seminars.

Register now
For inquiries and payment details, contact the Family Business Studies Center at 524-5333 or 524-5369 and look for Ms. Nall Asanias. Or e-mail her at **nallbabes@yahoo.com.**

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'Sticky business' for Chinese New Year

By Tarra V. Quismundo

LAST-MINUTE shoppers trooped to Manila's populous Chinatown district yesterday to buy not only good luck charms and amulets to usher in the Year of the Wooden Rooster, but boxes of the hugely popular "tikoy" (sticky rice cake), a fast-selling item that sold briskly on the eve of the Chinese New Year. *(See related story on page A1.)*

The crowds mingled with early merry makers who were welcomed to Binondo's colorful streets already decked with Chinese lanterns and red banners.

"My family always bought 'hopia' and 'tikoy' at this time of the year ever since I was a young girl," said Grace Peregrino, who ordered several boxes of the famous Chinese delicacy at the Eng Bee Tin Chinese Deli on Ongpin Street.

Peregrino, now 29, traveled to the Filipino-Chinese community in Manila—the only city in the country with a Chinatown district—with her sister all the way from their native Imus, Cavite, to buy P1,000 worth of "tikoy" that now comes in varied flavors like strawberry, pandan, ube and even sweet corn!

Harmony, togetherness

The Chinese buy "tikoy" for the new year, believing that the sweet cake made of sticky rice, sugar, water and oil represented togetherness and would bring harmony to the family.

"I bought the cakes for my relatives back home. It's really a yearly thing with us," said Peregrino.

Scores of "tikoy" fans like her flocked to one of Chinatown's biggest delis during the weekend to buy the best selling delicacy, said Honorio Garcelo, a store clerk for five years now at Eng Bee Tin.

The oriental delicacy and baked goods shop established in the '70s sold the favorite white and brown plain "tikoy" that sold from P72 to P170 and the new flavors that cost P100 for a small box, and P135 for the big box.

Indeed, the "tikoy" has come a long way, from the chewy one-flavor delicacy to today's trendy flavors, cut into bite size portions, dipped in a batter of beaten egg yolks, and pan-fried.

"Our trucks had been delivering supplies non-stop since Sunday, and orders had increased five times than the usual," said Garcelo, who monitored the comings and goings of the deli's delivery trucks, and the distribution of "tikoy" boxes to Eng Bee Tin's three Binondo branches.

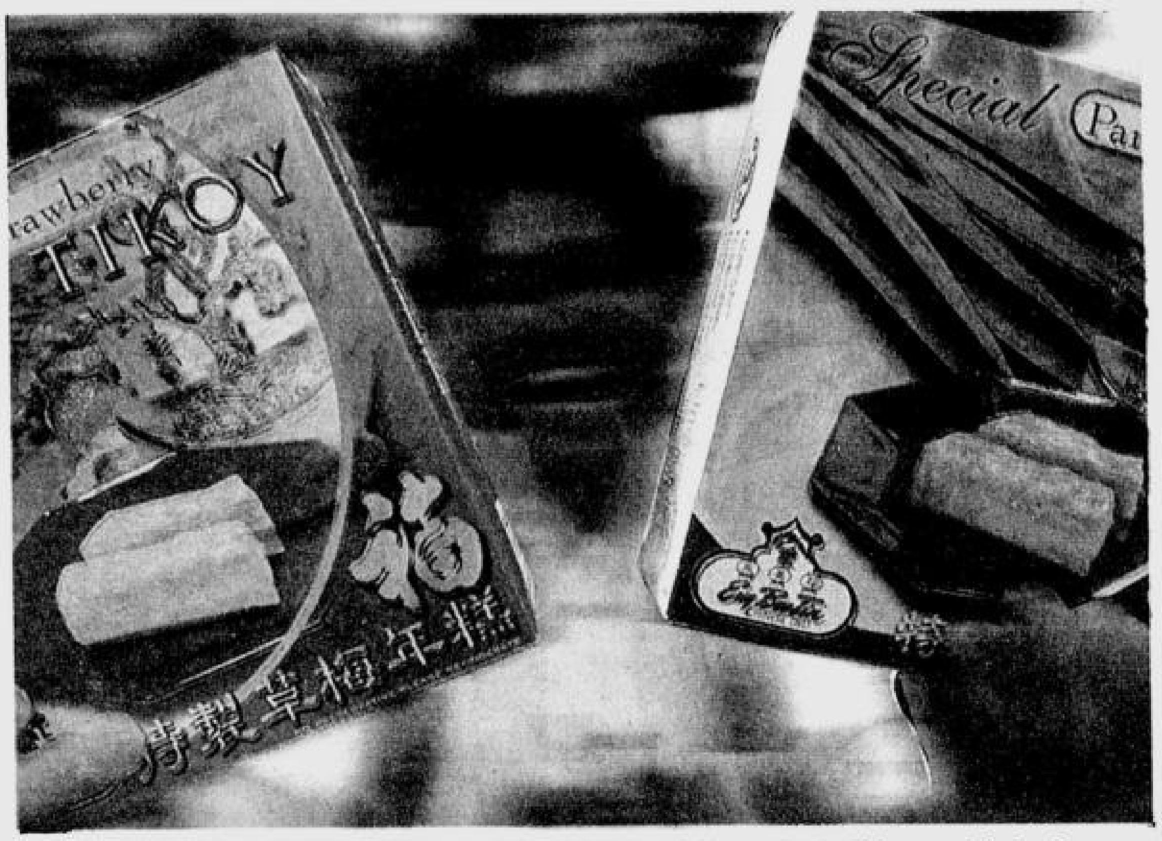
Garcelo said their branches had to extend its store hours to 10 p.m. to cater to the clients that came in droves.

Motorcade

Yesterday, Manila Mayor Lito Atienza led city residents in welcoming the Chinese New Year with a motorcade that wound its way around the streets of Binondo. With the mayor were Rep. Miles Roces, officials of the Chinatown Development Authority, and prominent members of the Chinese-Filipino community.

Atienza said that the city was proud of its Chinese historical and cultural roots. "We have always made it a point to celebrate major Chinese cultural events, especially the Chinese New Year,"

'STICKY/ A23



NO TABLE is complete without the popular "tikoy," a perennial bestseller in Chinatown's bake shops.
ERIK ARAZAS

MMDA men, Palace workers in traffic spat

By Tina G. Santos

THREE Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) employees and three workers from Malacañang engaged in a free-for-all following a minor traffic altercation Monday night in Monumento, Caloocan City.

Antonio Laguna, 40, supervisor; Julian Bigayan, 22; and Romeo Cortez, 21, all of the MMDA Sidewalk Clearing Operations Group (SCOG) accused Malacañang employees Maximo Julian, 31, shuttle bus driver; Ramon Dizon, 45, stay-in mechanic at Malacañang Motor Pool; and Emmanuel de Leon, 54, of allegedly mauling them.

The employees from the Office of the President, however, threatened to file charges of physical injuries against their accusers.

A police report showed that the incident happened around 6:30 p.m. near the Bonifacio Shrine in Edsa.

Police said the Malacañang employees, on board a bus, were reportedly traveling northbound along Edsa when Laguna told the driver to stop while his two companions tried to settle a problem with sidewalk vendors whom they apprehended in the area.

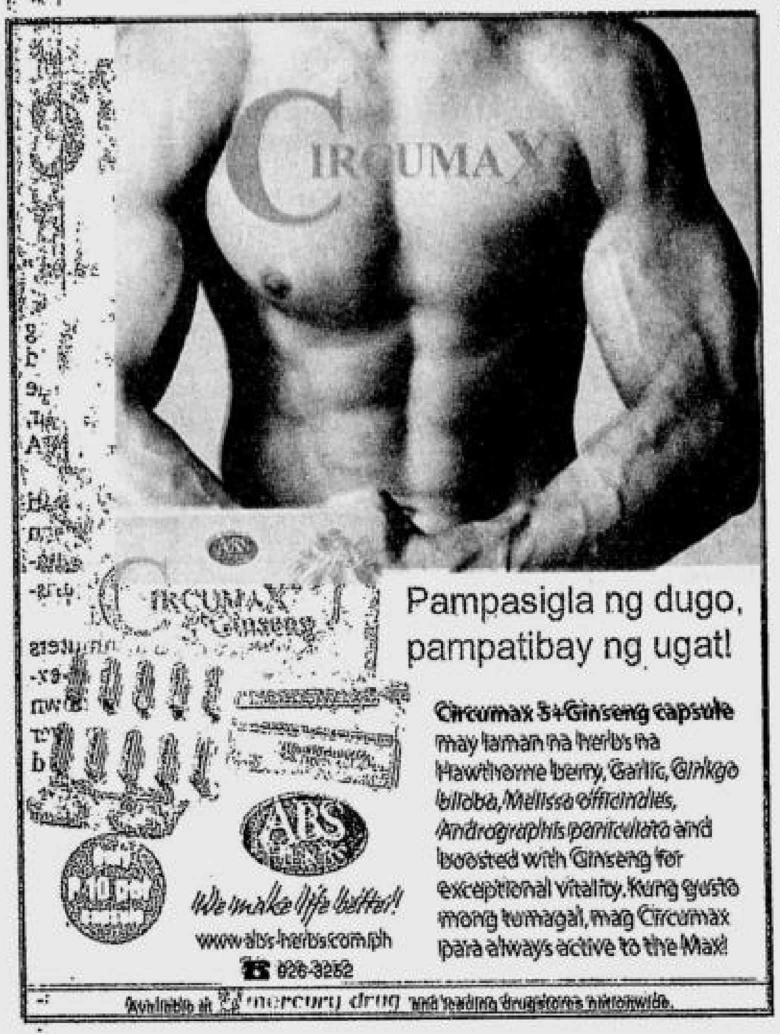
Julian then stepped on the brakes and nearly hit a pushcart on the road, prompting him and Dizon to alight from the bus to check their vehicle for damages, police said.

Finding no damage done, the two were about to board their bus when they reportedly heard somebody shouting curses at them.

This resulted in a heated argument between the MMDA and Malacañang groups. A free-for-all soon ensued in the busy thoroughfare, blocking traffic in the process.

The six men all sustained bruises and contusions after the fight that was halted when a passing mobile patrol unit intervened.

The men were later brought to a police detention center for questioning.



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Year of the Rooster: Buenas para sa 'Pinas!

For Sun, Smart and Globe subscribers

Congrats, Juana G. Camacho ng Sta. Rita, Batangas City! Nanalo ka ng P500 load!

"kht p mgkaron ng year of the gold kung puro rooster ng presidente ang tumutuka hnd magiging buenas ang pinas"

Tumawag lamang sa 8978808 at hanapin si Leslie Perez o si Dennis Leung.

Cellcard kada araw, cellphone kada linggo!

Text na!

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METROBRIEFS

Writer stabbed

TABLOID columnist Pablo Hernandez III, 40, of Valenzuela City, was wounded after he was stabbed by Joel Reduca, 34, inside a billiard hall in Quezon City before dawn yesterday. Investigators said Reduca, of Cavite, attacked Hernandez at 3:45 a.m. inside the Side Pocket Billiard Hall on Quezon Avenue. The victim said the suspect could have been sent by people he had criticized in his column.

Tina Santos

Troubled marriages

MARRIED couples who need healing in their relationship can seek help from a Retrouvaille weekend scheduled on Feb. 11 to 13 at the Mother of Mercy Spiritual Center, SVD Road, Barangay San Jose (near San Pablo Seminary), Tagaytay City. For more information, couples may call Fr. David Clay at 523-3361 or (0918) 9020511 and Nes and Inday Sitaca at 938-9719.

Med Center forum

THE MEDICAL Center Manila Department of Pediatrics will hold its 2nd Scientific Forum and the Friends of Pediatrica Foundation Inc. will host its fourth postgraduate course with the topic "Updates of Basic Pediatric Knowledge" on Feb. 11 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Pearl Manila Ballroom, Gen. Luna St. corner Taft Avenue, Ermita. Those interested to attend may contact Dr. Carien Gulay or Dr. Jesse Gonzales at tel. nos. 400-6069, 523-8131 loc. 5102, (0920) 580-4648, (0919) 839-7901 or you may e-mail them at pediamcmla@yahoo.com.

Prosecutor not giving any extension to Martin Soriano

By Philip C. Tubeza

TIME is running out for Martin Soriano.

A Department of Justice prosecutor yesterday said that he was not inclined to extend the period for the former National Bureau of Investigation agent to file his answer to the kidnapping charges against him.

During a preliminary investigation at the DOJ, prosecuting attorney Irwin Maraya said he was not inclined to grant the request of lawyer Renato Samonte, Soriano's counsel, to allow his client to file his counter-affidavit only after the Philippine National Police finishes its investigation on the 11 Manila policemen linked to the former NBI confidential agent.

"We cannot wait that long," Maraya said.

He said he would wait for the formal request from Soriano's counsel before he resolves the kidnapping, illegal possession of firearms, and robbery holdup charges against Soriano and 11 others.

Besides Soriano, the other respondents' were driver Danny Rendon, 29; and security Ramiro Ganzon, 44; a certain Bebang; and eight John Does.

They were charged before the DOJ with the kidnapping of Caroline Guillen, a resident of Ayala Heights in Quezon City, at the Citadel Inn on P. Burgos Street, Makati City, on Jan. 28.

Ganzon and Rendon yesterday filed a joint counter-affidavit and denied any involvement in the kidnapping.

They said they were with Soriano's children in his apartment at the Platinum Building on Jan. 28

Guillen said she had gone to Citadel Inn to meet Bebang to attend a party at Citadel Inn. But when she got there, Soriano allegedly accosted her and held her at gunpoint inside Room 3105.

Soriano's group allegedly "arrested" Guillen for possession of illegal drugs.

The former NBI agent allegedly demanded P2 million but later agreed to taking an Isuzu Crosswind XUV and $1,600 from Guillen's friend, James Marty Lim.

C5-KALAYAAN REOPENING

Makati blames MMDA for traffic

By Margaux C. Ortiz

MAKATI City wanted a closed lane of the C5-Kalayaan intersection opened, but is now blaming the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority for the resulting traffic.

It's sabotage, according to Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay in a press statement issued yesterday.

But MMDA Traffic Operations Center Executive Director Angelito Vergel de Dios is saying Makati should not pass the blame on them.

This developed as motorists and commuters observed that traffic has come to a crawl at the intersection after the city opened the Makati-bound lane of Kalayaan Avenue to criss-crossing traffic.

Traffic became specially chaotic on Feb. 3, the day Makati opened the closed lane.

Binay said, "The MMDA cannot disclaim any responsibility for the traffic breakdown at C5-Kalayaan."

The mayor accused the MMDA of pulling out its traffic enforcers at the height of the evening rush hour to put the city in a bad light.

In a letter to MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando, Binay said traffic lights in the area also malfunctioned after the pull-out.

Binay said they could file administrative charges against MMDA officials and personnel and charge the agency for the cost of restoring the original traffic scheme in the area.

The mayor explained that the city decided to open the lane and remove the MMDA's U-turn slot in the area following complaints from motorists and an alleged increase in the number of vehicular accidents in the area.

Binay also said that an MMDA survey dated Sept. 13, 2004, showed that the average travel speed on C5 decreased from 63 to 81 percent after the closure of the lane and adoption of the U-turn scheme at the intersection.

Vergel De Dios denied knowledge of the survey Binay was using to justify the reopening of the intersecting lane on Kalayaan Avenue.

"It would be highly irresponsible of us to continue implementing the scheme after that survey proved it useless," Vergel de Dios said in a phone interview.

He said their enforcers left the area starting last week after the Makati Department of Public Safety (DPS) personnel had taken over traffic management at the intersection.

"Their people and our enforcers had totally different ideas of how to man traffic in the area," Vergel de Dios explained.

Regarding the malfunctioning traffic lights, Vergel de Dios said these were not connected to the MMDA traffic command center, making it impossible for MMDA to sabotage them.

"We did everything the Makati City government wanted even though the area is part of a national road and under our jurisdiction," Vergel de Dios said.

Motorists and commuters asked by the INQUIRER have expressed dismay at the slow down of traffic at the intersection ever since the scheme was changed last week.

'Sticky business'...

From page A22

he said, adding that the annual observance of the event with the participation of the city government started when he took over the mayor's post seven years ago.

Various Chinese-Filipino schools and cultural groups that joined the celebration included the Chiang Kai Shek College, Philippine Cultural High School, Philippine San Bin School, Wushu Federation Philippines, Dynamic Youth Choir and Sammy Shi Xui.

Other highlights of the event were a lion dance competition, the presentation of Mary Grace Sy, this year's representative to the Miss Chinatown International pageant, and a fireworks display.

Metro tourist route spruced up for visitors

By Margaux C. Ortiz

IN A bid to attract more foreign visitors to the country, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) has started an intensive cleanup and beautification of roads leading to and from the international airport.

With their "Pook na Bulok, Negosyo Di Papasok" (A Rotten Place Attracts No Business) program, MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando said visitors would be encouraged to return to the country if there were no derelict structures and dingy barangays greeting them upon their arrival.

"We do not want such eyesores to scare off tourists and potential investors," Fernando said in an interview.

The MMDA chair said they had begun clearing the sidewalks of Metro Manila's tourist route, which includes Airport Road, Mia Road, Roxas Boulevard, South Superhighway and Quirino Avenue.

Fernando said that aside from erecting plant boxes on the sidewalks, they had also demolished illegal structures, including barangay halls and guardhouses in the area.

He added that these roads, including Edsa, had also undergone sectional blocking to improve travel speed and convenience.

The program is in line with MMDA's campaign to clear the roads and sidewalks of the metropolis in an effort to make Metro Manila more attractive and liveable.

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Transportation and Communications
TOLL REGULATORY BOARD

NORTH LUZON EXPRESSWAY
Approved Initial Authorized Toll Rates

Notice is hereby given that the Toll Regulatory Board ("TRB") has approved the following initial Authorized Toll Rates for the Closed System and Open System applicable to Phase 1 of the North Luzon Tollway Project starting at 12:00 A.M., February 8, 2005, Tuesday:

Vehicle Class	Closed system (Peso per km)	Open system (Peso per entry)
Class 1	2.483838	42.406999
Class 2	6.209596	106.017496
Class 3	7.451515	127.220996

This notice is being made pursuant to TRB Board Resolution No. 2005-04 dated 27 January 2005 which requires publication of the initial Authorized Toll Rates once in a newspaper of general circulation in accordance with law.

Any interested expressway user shall have the right to file within a period of ninety (90) days from the date of publication of this notice, a petition with the TRB at the 2nd Floor, Integrated Bar of the Philippines Building, Julia Vargas Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City for a review of the initial toll rates.

SO ORDERED.

By Authority of the Board:

(SGD) MANUEL G. IMPERIAL
Executive Director
Toll Regulatory Board

Approved Toll Fees of the New NLE

Effective February 08, 2005

CLASS 1

	BWK	VAL	MEY	MAR	BOC	STR	PUL	SMM	SNF	MXC	ANG	DAU
Mapulang Lupa	42											
Valenzuela	42											
Lawang Bato	42	42										
Meycauayan	42	42										
Marilao	42	42	42									
Bocaue	51	51	51	51								
Tabang	75	75	75	75	23							
Sta. Rita	78	78	78	78	27							
Pulilan	95	95	95	95	44	17						
San Simon	124	124	124	124	73	46	29					
San Fernando	146	146	146	146	95	68	51	22				
Mexico	163	163	163	163	112	85	68	40	18			
Angeles	184	184	184	184	133	106	89	60	38	21		
Dau	203	203	203	203	151	125	108	79	57	39	18	
Sta. Ines	203	203	203	203	151	125	108	79	57	39	18	13

CLASS 2

	BWK	VAL	MEY	MAR	BOC	STR	PUL	SMM	SNF	MXC	ANG	DAU
Mapulang Lupa	106											
Valenzuela	106											
Lawang Bato	106	106										
Meycauayan	106	106										
Marilao	106	106	106									
Bocaue	129	129	129	129								
Tabang	188	188	188	188	59							
Sta. Rita	196	196	196	196	67							
Pulilan	238	238	238	238	109	42						
San Simon	311	311	311	311	181	115	72					
San Fernando	366	366	366	366	236	170	127	55				
Mexico	410	410	410	410	280	213	171	99	44			
Angeles	462	462	462	462	333	266	223	151	96	52		
Dau	507	507	507	507	378	311	269	197	142	98	45	
Sta. Ines	507	507	507	507	378	311	269	197	142	98	45	33

CLASS 3

	BWK	VAL	MEY	MAR	BOC	STR	PUL	SMM	SNF	MXC	ANG	DAU
Mapulang Lupa	127											
Valenzuela	127											
Lawang Bato	127	127										
Meycauayan	127	127										
Marilao	127	127	127									
Bocaue	155	155	155	155								
Tabang	225	225	225	225	70							
Sta. Rita	235	235	235	235	80							
Pulilan	266	266	266	266	131	51						
San Simon	373	373	373	373	218	138	87					
San Fernando	430	439	439	439	284	204	153	66				
Mexico	491	491	491	491	336	256	206	119	53			
Angeles	554	554	554	554	399	319	268	181	115	63		
Dau	609	609	609	609	454	374	323	236	170	117	55	
Sta. Ines	609	609	609	609	454	374	323	236	170	117	55	39

	LENGTH	TOLL RATE		
	(In Kms.)	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3
Subic - Tipo	8.50	21.00	53.00	63.00

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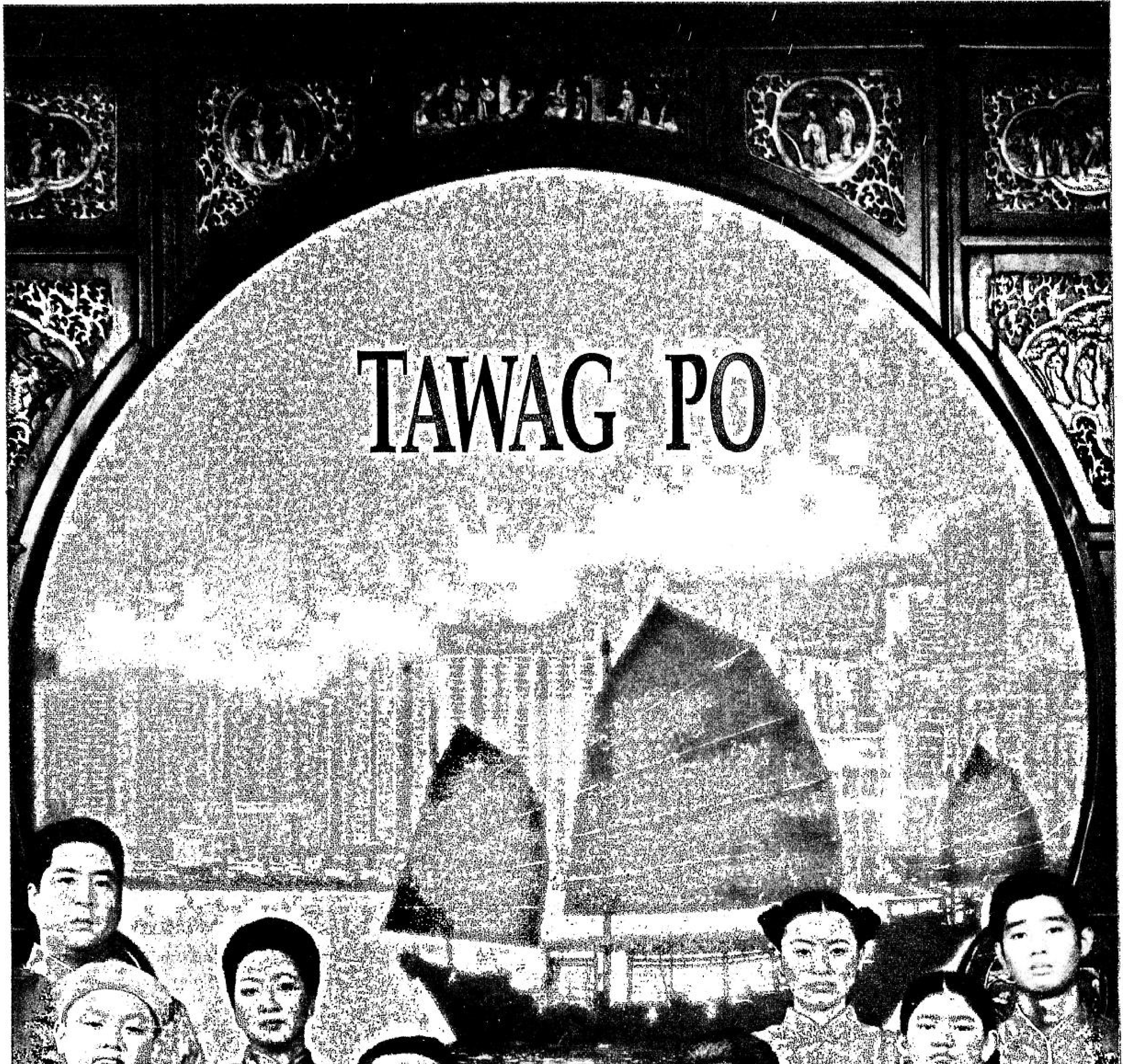

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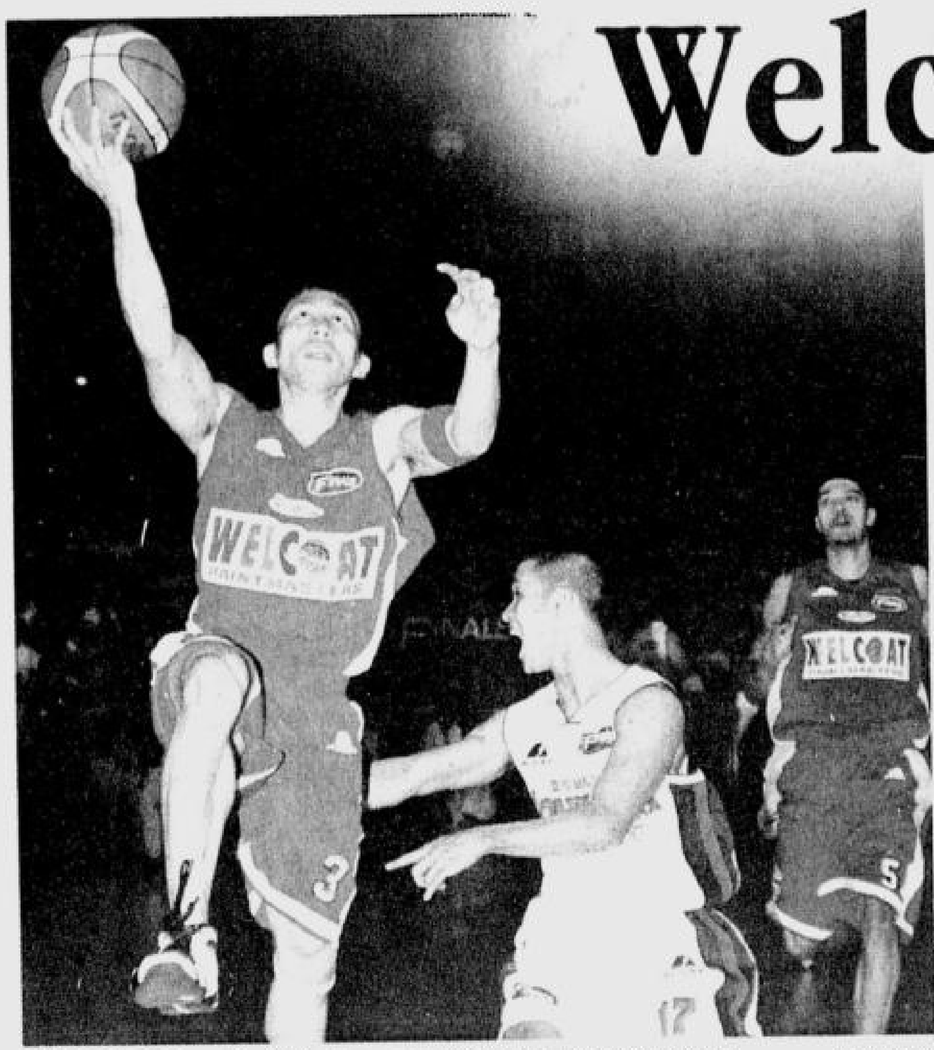
Welcoat forces decider



WELCOAT'S Ryan Dy (left) drives past Froilan Baguion of Montaña RUDY ESPERAS

GAME TOMORROW (*Makati Coliseum*)
3 p.m.—Welcoat vs Montaña
(Game 5 of best-of-five Finals)

By Jasmine W. Payo

WELCOAT coach Caloy Garcia certainly got his team ready to forge a do-or-die finals showdown.

"Since Sunday, I've been telling the team that the only way to come back from this 2-1 deficit is to trust each other," said Garcia after his Paintmasters foiled the Montaña Jewels' bid to wrap up the title series, 80-77, yesterday in Game 4 of the PBL Open Championship at the Makati Coliseum.

"Our bench stepped up in this game," added Garcia. "We really didn't want to give up."

Ryan Dy played with a sense of urgency in the final minute as he scored on a fastbreak to lift the Paintmasters, 78-77. He later baited a foul after a crucial rebound, and then calmly sank his freethrows to pad the lead, 80-77, with only 11 seconds left.

The Jewels had a chance to force overtime, but Dy completed his hero's role as he intercepted Alex Compton's pass to Reed Juntilla in the dying seconds.

Dy finished with 12 points after going scoreless in the last two games.

Leo Najorda shot a team-high 18 points, including 10 during Welcoat's decisive third-quarter run. Chester Tolomia chipped in 15 points.

Tied at 66, Tolomia and Eugene Tan shot back-to-back triples that gave Welcoat a 72-68 edge, less than four minutes remaining.

Compton and Juntilla, however, put the Jewels back on top, 73-72.

After Marvin Ortiguerra drilled four straight points to wrest back a Welcoat lead, 76-75, Jon Dan Salvador responded for a 77-76 Jewels advantage.

It was then that Dy took charge.

Welcoat survived the up-tempo offense of Alex Compton, who shot a game-high 30 points, including 18 from the three-point area.

Tied at 47, Najorda scored the Paintmasters' last 10 points for a 57-51 lead by the end of the third quarter.

Compton, however, scored three key triples early in the fourth quarter to tie the ballgame once again, 66-66.

The Paintmasters trailed by as many as 10 points, 24-14, in the second period, but they unloaded a 10-0 bomb to knot the game, 24-24. But Compton rallied the Jewels back for a 38-35 halftime advantage.

Anthony Washington struggled offensively for the first time in the finals series, scoring only nine points.

The Paintmasters again committed too many errors, giving up 26 points out of 24 turnovers. But their taller. lineup again allowed them to beat the Jewels off the boards, 43-27.

The scores:

WELCOAT 80—Najorda 18, Tolomia 15, Dy 12, Ortiguerra 11, Washington 9, Tan 5, Sta. Maria 4, Coching 4, Gamboa 2, Estrada 0, Reyes 0.

MONTAÑA 77—Compton 30, Salvador 12, Magpayo 10, Juntilla 8, Dela Cuesta 5, Capus 4, Guerrero 4, Baguion 2, Vergara 1, Mercado 1, Espiritu 0.

Quarters: 14-21, 35-38, 57-51, 80-77.

Asi lawyers blast, 'amuse' Eala no end

THE PBA suffers from a credibility problem with commissioner Noli Eala calling the shots, according to representatives of Talk 'N Text, who are waging a battle against the league over the Taulava citizenship case.

Phone Pals spokesperson Rey Espinosa and Asi Taulava lawyer Eduardo Francisco yesterday alleged that for the PBA to prosper it must be imbued with great leadership.

Instead of incurring Eala's ire over their statements, though, Espinosa and Francisco drew an amused chuckle.

"Eala is guilty of so many wishy-washy decisions," said Espinosa, who is also a lawyer. "There's something wrong with Eala's leadership. The PBA has [had] so many crises which [would] not [have] happened under former commissioners Rudy Salud and Jun Bernardino."

The comment hardly ruffled Eala, who simply laughed at the statements.

"It's amusing that such an insider kind of viewpoint would come from a league outsider," said Eala. "This is probably another attempt to sway the tide of public opinion to their favor so I'll leave it at that. It would only make things worse if I dignified their comments with an opinion of my own."

Espinosa and Francisco appeared in yesterday's PSA Forum sponsored by Red Bull, Agfa Colors and Pagcor at the Manila Pavilion and said Eala should follow the rules of law regarding Taulava.

Outside of the Taulava case, the two did not mention other supposedly bad decisions made by Eala.

Taulava was suspended after the justice department, picking up on a Senate report, cast doubts on the foreign-born cager's citizenship. When the Phone Pals fielded Taulava in an 89-71 Game 1 triumph, Eala forfeited the victory, a decision backed by the board.

"Every decision I make, I have been very transparent with the board and they have, in fact, fully supported those decisions," explained Eala.

But both lawyers vowed to continue the fight for Taulava.

"The team has found a rallying point in Asi," Espinosa said. "We'll fight till the end."

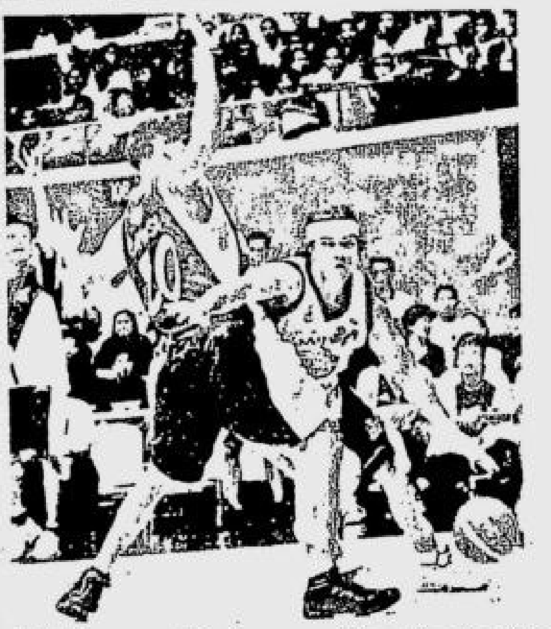
Talk 'N Text and Barangay Ginebra are presently tied, 2-2, in their ongoing Gran Matador PBA Philippine Cup.

Games and Amusements Board (GAB) chair Eric Buhain and the regulatory board's legal counsel, lawyer Ric Villanil, also graced the weekly session.

Buhain, former chair of the PSC, said his office will conduct its own investigation—not on any of the court rulings made on the case but on the PBA's decision to nullify Talk 'N Text's Game 1 win in the Gran Matador Philippine Cup finals.

"The rights of any person are within the jurisdiction of the law, so we leave the citizenship issue to the discretion of the courts," said Buhain. "We at GAB only have the jurisdiction on the contracts submitted to us. Our investigations will be fair."

Dennis Eroa



WHAT'S INSIDE

■ La Salle whips Letran /A31

■ Phone Pals gun for 3rd straight win /A26

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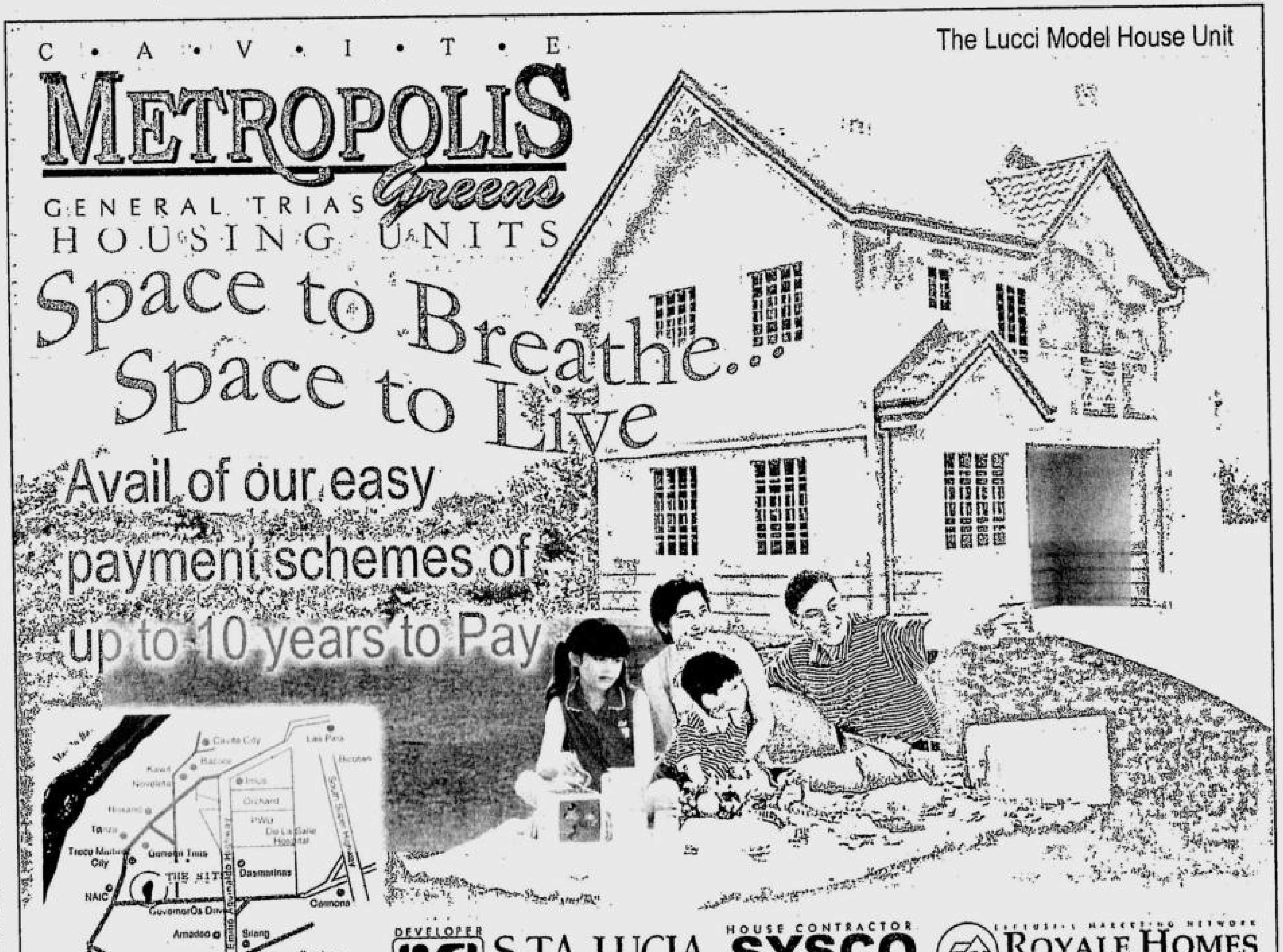

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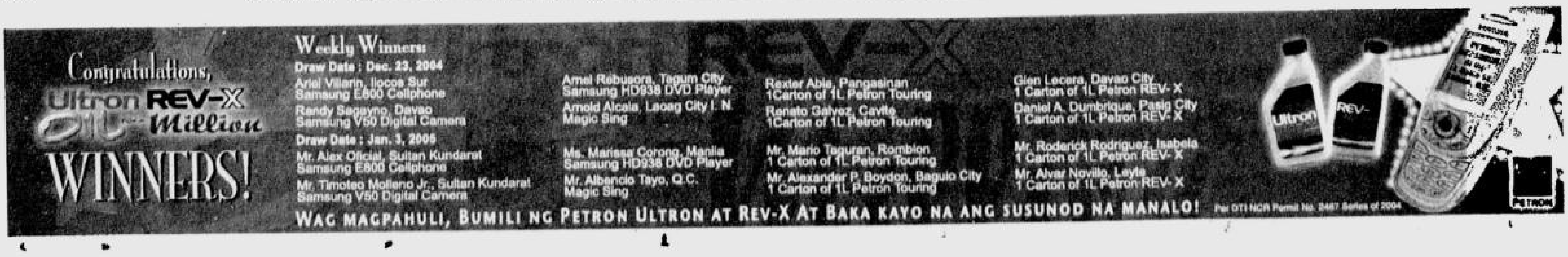

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Samsung E800 Cellphone
Randy Sagayno, Davao
Samsung V50 Digital Camera
Draw Date : Jan. 3, 2005
Mr. Alex Oficial, Sultan Kundarat
Samsung E800 Cellphone
Mr. Timoteo Molleno Jr., Sultan Kundarat
Samsung V50 Digital Camera
Arnel Rebusora, Tagum City
Samsung HD938 DVD Player
Arnold Alcala, Laoag City I. N.
Magic Sing
Ms. Marissa Corong, Manila
Samsung HD938 DVD Player
Mr. Albencio Tayo, Q.C.
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AUGUST DELA CRUZ

GINEBRA'S Eric Menk tries to create space against the defense of Talk 'N Text forward Don Camaso.

Phone Pals gun for 3rd straight win over Kings

GAME TODAY (*Araneta Coliseum*)
7:30 p.m.—Talk 'N Text vs Barangay Ginebra
(*Game 5 best-of-seven Finals*)

Game 1—Talk 'N Text d. Barangay Ginebra, 89-71 (forfeited)
Game 2—Barangay Ginebra d. Talk 'N Text, 106-105
Game 3—Talk 'N Text d. Barangay Ginebra, 102-66
Game 4—Talk 'N Text d. Barangay Ginebra, 90-85

BY NOW, Talk 'N Text should have realized the folly of fielding Asi Taulava in Game 1.

Had they kept Taulava in the freezer in deference to a league-mandated suspension, the Phone Pals could have had a 3-1 advantage over the Barangay Ginebra Kings going into Game 5 of the PBA Philippine Cup Finals tonight at the Araneta Coliseum.

It would have been a big edge since only one team—ironically it was Ginebra against Shell in the 1991 First Conference—had bounced back from a 1-3 deficit to win a best-of-seven series.

So instead of a cushion, all the Phone Pals have is consolation. Talk 'N Text suddenly gained momentum after tying the series at 2-2 following a 90-85 win over the Kings in Game 4.

The series-tying victory came a few days after the Phone Pals fell behind by 0-2 courtesy of a forfeited Game 1 victory, which they handily won, 89-71.

And with the series tied, Game 5 has suddenly become so crucial.

"Whoever wins Game 5 will have a big advantage over the other," said Talk 'N Text coach Joel Banal, expecting another rough night in the game to be aired by ABC 5 at 7:30.

"Although there's no guarantee, the winner of Game 5 will at least be in a better position to win the championship," he added.

Since that Game 1 forfeiture, Willie Miller and Jimmy Alapag have been churning out explosive performances game after game.

The forfeiture was triggered by the Phone Pals' insistence to suit up Taulava on the strength of a Quezon City court order despite the league's unflinching stand to continue suspending the 2003 MVP.

Mark Telan has also been essaying his role as Talk 'N Text's chief slotman to the hilt with Yancy de Ocampo and Vic Pablo always ready to back him up.

"I have to commend them on that Game 4 performance," said Banal of his key players.

"I hope they will continue to play this way until the end of the series and give Ginebra a type of competition like this (Game 4)," he added.

Plagued by turnovers and hounded by freethrow woes, the Kings are looking for a quick-fix solution to prevent Talk 'N Text from picking up a third straight series victory.

"Hopefully, we could find a solution," said Barangay Ginebra coach Siot Tanquingcen. "We can't afford to make 24 turnovers and expect to win."

Eric Menk, the league's player of the conference, missed all of his four foul shots and was slapped with a three-second violation at a crucial point of Game 4.

Mark Caguioa "erupted for 43 points but misfired two three-pointers when everything was on the line.

"But I don't have worries on my players. I know they'll play hard come Wednesday (today)," said Tanquingcen.

"Nothing's going to be easy from now to the end. But one thing's for sure, every time people question us or start doubting us, that's the time we play our best."

June Navarro

Cua tops MCC amateur ladies

CALOOCAN City bet Shirley Cua defeated erstwhile co-leader Christy Lamiel Bernales of Galas, Quezon City, in the seventh and final round to emerge champion in the recent Metropolitan Chess Club (MCC) Ladies Amateur active chess tournament held at the J & F Divino Bldg. along Aurora Blvd. in Quezon City.

Cua scored 6.0 points to receive the top prize of P3,000 in the event organized by MCC founding chair and former Olympian WNM Mila Emperado. Bernales finished with 5.0 points and dropped to a share of 2nd to 5th places with Gina Edaniol, Aileen Riza Canos and Jennifer Advincula. All of them received P750 each. Rounding off the top ten winners were Enerose Magno (4.5), Christine Dacayo (4.5), Louise Blanco (4.5), Jayveelyn and Jan Jodilyn Fronda. *NM Marlon Bernardino, Contributor*

Celis eyes tune-up games abroad

By Dennis U. Eroa

NOT EVEN the sudden resignation of nine veteran members of the national women's basketball team will deter new coach Raymond Celis from forming a highly competitive squad in time for this year's SEA Games.

"I never thought that intrigues are going to be a part of my coaching life. Maybe they (players) thought that they are irreplaceable," said the former UP Maroon playmaker, who replaced Bai Cristobal at the helm of the national squad.

Celis said the coaching staff is working doubly hard and scouting the provinces for future Nationals.

"If plans don't miscarry, we're also going to play tune-up matches in Europe and Korea," Celis told yesterday's PSA Forum.

Also a coach of La Salle-Greenhills, Celis told a shocking incident during a tryout for probable Nationals.

"Caasi (Cristina) told me I should show my worth as a coach during the tryout. I told her that isn't it the other way around. The player must show her worth," Celis said.

The 5-foot-11 Caasi, Che Lubiano and Emelia Vega are among those who quit the team after Celis replaced Cristobal as head coach.

Celis, however, continues to feel upbeat about the future of the Nationals.

"National interest is above all interest," said Celis. "The coaching staff isn't going to lose sleep regarding the resignations."

Basketball Association of the Philippines (BAP) vice president Boy Codiñera, who was with Celis in the session sponsored by Red Bull, Agfa Colors and Pagcor, said all the new coaching staff was asking for is to give them the chance to implement its training program.

Celis said he is forming a tall but fast lineup that could stand a chance against the region's major powers in women's basketball. He counts Singapore, Thailand and Malaysia as among the probable title contenders.

"Our chance of winning would depend on the material that we can get," said the eldest son of former Crispa player Jun and sports columnist Beth Celis.

LOMBARDI TROPHY: New England Patriots vice chair Jonathan Kraft (left) raises the Vince Lombardi Trophy to the fans gathered to greet the Patriots as they return from their Super Bowl victory. REUTERS

Espinosa-Cruz tiff slated in California

REFUSING to be cowed by calls for him to retire, former two-division world champ Luisito "Lindol" Espinosa will face a new opponent for his bout on Feb. 18 in the United States.

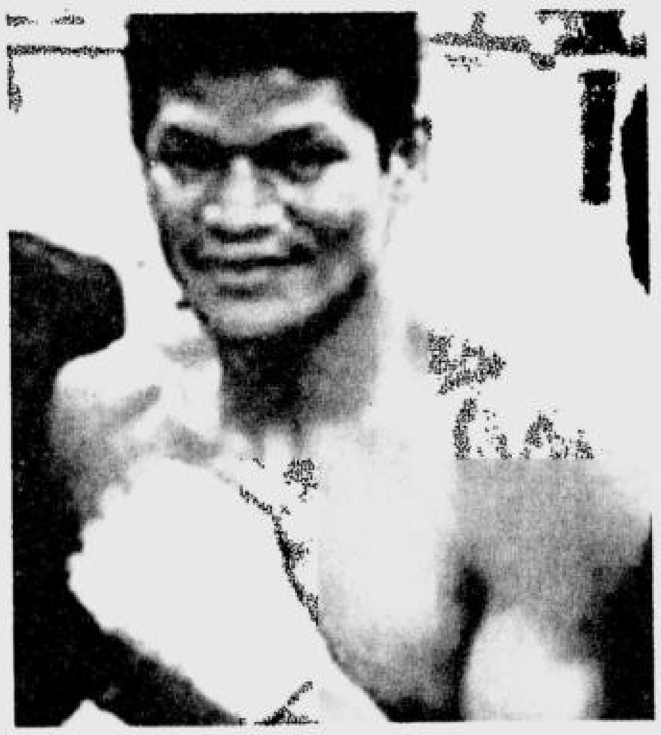
The 37-year-old champ is now set to face heavy-handed Mexican Cristobal "Lacandon" Cruz in the main event of a card to be held at the Stockton Memorial Civic Auditorium in Stockton, California.

Originally, Espinosa (47-12, 26 KOs) was set to face another Mexican in Martin Honorio on the same date, but apparently negotiations bogged down.

Cruz has a record of 29 wins, 7 losses, 1 draw with 18 victories via the short route.

Unlike Espinosa's previous foes, Carlos Navarro and Zahir Raheem, Cruz will provide Espinosa a chance to redeem himself with a win. After all, Cruz is not known to be a scientific fighter, but rather a street brawler that will give the Filipino a chance to shine.

Also seeing action on the seven-bout card are unbeaten junior welter Arturo Morales (14-0-1, 4 KOs) vs Arturo Urena (18-8-1, 14 KOs) in an eight-rounder. The card will be aired on Guilty Boxing's "Guilty Fight Night" telecast, according to Fightnews. *Salven L. Lagumbay, Contributor*



ESPINOSA: Still trying at 37

Generals clinch NCRAA diadem

GAME TODAY (*Pasay Sports Complex*)
9 a.m.—La Salle vs PMI (Game 3)

NINO Songco played the game of his life yesterday, powering the Emilio Aguinaldo College Generals to their first ever title in the 12th National Capital Region Athletic Association (NCRAA) men's basketball championship at the Pasay Sports Complex.

The 6-foot-3 Songco delivered 25 points in leading the Generals to a 91-83 overtime victory over the Colegio de San Lorenzo Griffins in Game 2 of their best-of-three finals series.

Songco, who is on his last playing with the Generals, poured 10 points in the extra period, enabling EAC to extricate itself from a 76-76 regulation deadlock.

It was a performance, which earned Songco the Most Valuable Player award and gave the Generals their first NCRAA championship in six years.

"We've been waiting for this for a long time. It took us six years to put up a competitive team. It doesn't come with one championship, but three," said a hoarse-voiced EAC coach Nomar Isla as his boys poured water over each other and over the heads of their supporters in celebration.

Earlier, La Salle-Manila won over Philippine Maritime Institute, 62-57, to extend the women's best-of-three finals to a Game 3.

Miel David had 21 points while Kristine Prado shot 17 as the Lady Archers bounced back from a 54-60 loss in Game 1.

Chito Jaime led the Griffins with 19 points and tied the match at 76 with his drive with 27 ticks to go.

He could have won the match for CDSL with nine ticks to go. But a dribbling error forced the Griffins to commit a costly turnover.

The Generals, who swept their title series at 2-0, took Game 1 with an 82-73 triumph.

At the start of the extension period, Songco drove in and then scored on a pass by Ronjay Buenafe with 3:52 to go, touching off a 9-2 surge which gave EAC an 85-78 edge.

Buenafe made 18 points and hit three triples in the third canto as the Generals took a 65-55 spread.

The scores:

Senior

EAC 91—Songco 25, Buenafe 18, Quiambao 11, Melocoton 11, Du 8, Castillo 5, Sabado 5, Musni 3, Esplanada 3, Ebuen 0.

CDSL 83—Jaime 19, Rivera 15, Malig 12, Badley 11, Yap 7, Manansala 6, Gran 5, Lim 4, Galvez 4.

Halftime: 41-31.

Rodrigo headlines Bakbakan sa Tagaytay 3

By Salven L. Lagumbay, *Contributor*

FOLLOWING his impressive first-round knockout win over a Thai slugger last Jan. 29, ex-RP flyweight boss Edgar "Bombardero" Rodrigo plunges into action right away as he faces Flash Simbajon in the mainer of the "Bakbakan sa Tagaytay-Part 3" on Feb. 12 at the Tagaytay Sports Center.

The fight, set to start at 2 p.m. is tagged as a Philippine flyweight championship eliminator, with the winner gaining the right to challenge reigning RP 112-lb champ Federico Catubay of Cebu.

Promoter Lope Sarreal Jr. said yesterday that Tagaytay City Mayor Abraham Tolentino will award the trophy to the winner of the main event.

Rodrigo is set to embark on a comeback trail after his once-promising career took a nosedive following back-to-back losses in Japan. Prior to that, he had knocked out Cebu's Z Gorres, a feat that catapulted Rodrigo into the country's elite list.

In the chief support, Dante Cantiga of Johnny Elorde Stable battles Joel Eskol of Romano Stable in another 10-rounder in the bantamweight class.

The rest of the card pits Allan Fuentes against Jojo Rodrigo; Dandee Francisco versus Elmer Saligumba; Gerry Beltran against Roel Ibanez, and Monico Laurente versus Dexter Mendoza.

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Ronaldo-less Brazil XI tackles Hong Kong

HONG KONG—World champions Brazil take on Asian minnows Hong Kong here on Wednesday in a lopsided international friendly overshadowed by the no-show of star striker Ronaldo.

Coach Carlos Alberto Parreira confirmed the three-time world player of the year had not been released by his club Real Madrid for what would have been his 100th appearance for Brazil.

"There's no Fifa regulation that players have to join their national teams if they don't want to play outside of Europe," he said.

"We tried our best but from the beginning Real Madrid said they wouldn't release him."

Organizers had delayed confirming the absence of Ronaldo, who has recently returned to Spain after a trip to Brazil and is due to marry model Daniella Ciccarelli on Valentine's Day.

Ticket sales have been slow for the Lunar New Year's day event, blasted by Fifa president Sepp Blatter as a mere "money-making" exercise, with 15,000 still unsold a day before kick-off.

But the Hong Kong Football Association said it had no intention of cutting the price and was confident that most of the tickets, at 800 Hong Kong dollars ($102.6) or more, would be snapped up.

Captain Cafu, who has represented Brazil at a record three World Cups and led them to their 2002 success, also said he was unconcerned at the lack of fans on hand to greet the team at the airport late on Monday.

"It doesn't matter that not many fans were there last night," he said. "Tomorrow the stadium will have a lot of fans to support us, that's the important thing."

Even without Ronaldo and injured Inter Milan striker Adriano, Brazil boast a star-studded line-up including Fifa world player of the year Ronaldinho, Real Madrid galactico Roberto Carlos and Santos forward Robinho.

Parreira, who guided Brazil to World Cup glory in 1994, said the five-time world champions would use the match as preparation for next month's qualifiers for Germany 2006.

For Hong Kong it's all about damage-limitation, although they will be hoping to improve on their 144th Fifa world ranking and restore some pride after their 7-0 hammering by China in their last outing in November. AFP

Chinese hired to coach US volley squad

BEIJING—Lang Ping, the "spiritual leader of Chinese volleyball," has been hired to coach the American women in their run-up to the Beijing 2008 Olympics.

"USA Volleyball is honored to be able to reach an agreement with 'Jenny' (Lang's English name) to be the next USA women's national team coach," USA Volleyball head Doug Beal said on the organization's website.

"Lang Ping is perhaps the most decorated, successful women's volleyball personality in the world, and I am excited that we are going to be able to have her leading our women's national team ... her accomplishments are unequaled."

Lang's hiring could lead to a potentially heated match-up against China in Beijing, where she is still revered.

China's current women's team, the reigning Olympic and world champions, is coached by Chen Zhonghe, a former Lang assistant.

Known as the "Iron Hammer" during her playing days, Lang was inducted into the Volleyball Hall of Fame as a player in 2002, culminating a career in which she established herself as one of the finest female players ever.

She led the Chinese women to five world championships in the 1980s and a gold medal at the 1984 Olympics. Later, she coached the Chinese women to a silver medal at the 1996 Olympics and a silver at the 1998 World Championships.

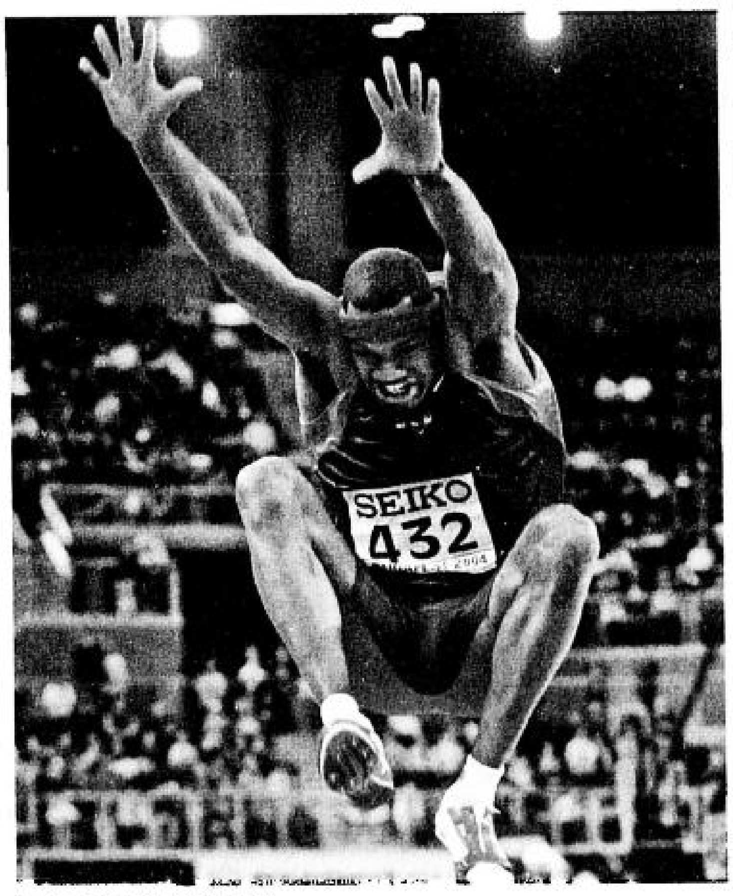
"I am very excited to work for USA Volleyball," said Lang, 44.

"I will do my best to make the program even stronger. Our first goal is to qualify for the 2008 Olympic Games."

Although no details of her contract were given, Chinese press reports said it was a four-year $600,000 deal.

Lang's hiring has been the center of intense speculation since she announced two weeks ago that she was being considered for the job.

Although many domestic reports expressed shock that she would accept a position with the rival USA, Internet chatrooms almost universally wished her well. *AFP*



BACK ON TRACK

United States' Savante Stringfellow leaps during the long jump finals at the World Indoor Athletic Championships in Budapest last year. After tearing his Achilles' tendon during warm-ups for a meet last May, Stringfellow is back, making his 2005 debut at the Tyson Invitational . AP

27-year-old goalie dies during training

LJUBLJANA—Ljubljana goalkeeper Nedzad Botonjic collapsed and died during training late on Monday, Slovenian state agency STA reported.

The 27-year-old Botonjic suffered a heart attack and died despite rapid medical attention, the report said.

Club officials were not available for comment.

Botonjic, Ljubljana's first choice goalkeeper, played for several Slovenian first division sides before joining the club from Murska Sobota in 2003. *Reuters*

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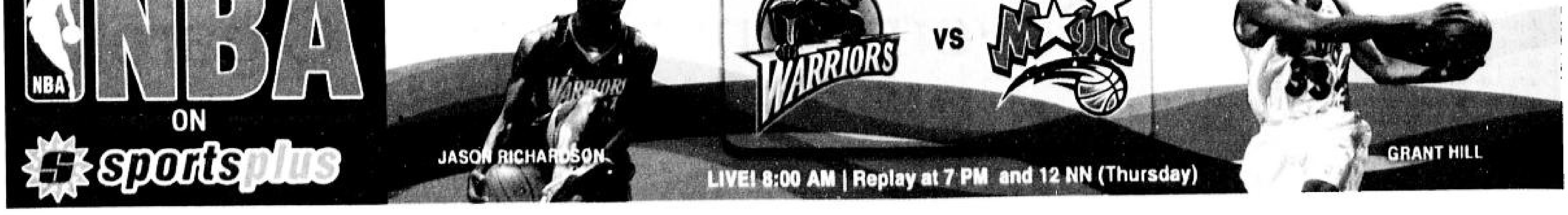
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Kidd, Carter power Nets past 76

EAST RUTHERFORD, New Jersey—Jason Kidd notched a triple-double and fellow All-Star guard Vince Carter poured in 43 points to reach 10,000 in his career as the New Jersey Nets rallied to beat the Philadelphia 76ers, 107-97, in overtime Monday.

Kidd had 22 points, 11 rebounds and dished out a season-high 16 assists to collect his 62nd triple-double and help the Nets extend their home winning streak to five games.

Carter, obtained in a trade with the Toronto Raptors earlier this season, became the 41st player to reach the 10,000 milestone. His final five points in regulation forced overtime.

To complete a productive night, Carter also contributed 14 rebounds.

The 76ers were without Allen Iverson, the NBA's leading scorer missing the game with flu.

"He was up all night throwing up," Sixers coach Jim O'Brien said, adding that Iverson was sent home. "I think his whole family is ill."

Willie Green started in place of Iverson, who missed his sixth game this season. He recently missed three games with a left rotator cuff strain.

Iverson is averaging 28.8 points, 7.6 assists and 2.17 steals in 42 minutes. He's tied for fourth in the league in assists, third in steals and tied for second with Kobe Bryant in minutes played.

Six Philadelphia players scored in double figures, led by 28 points from Green.

In Atlanta, Antoine Walker collected 26 points, Tony Delk added 25 and Josh Childress had his first career double-double as the Hawks upset the slumping Los Angeles Lakers, 114-108.

Childress recorded season highs in points (19) and rebounds (11) as the Hawks, last in the Eastern Conference, claimed only their 10th victory of the season.

Los Angeles almost erased a 29-point deficit, closing to 98-97 with three minutes to play.

Kobe Bryant, who continues to nurse a badly sprained ankle that has sidelined him for nearly a month, watched from the Lakers' bench.

Lamar Odom led the Lakers with 28 points and Tierre Brown added 27.

In Washington, Gilbert Arenas tied his career-high with 43 points, including 16 in the fourth quarter, to lead the Wizards to a 108-104 triumph over the Indiana Pacers.

Antawn Jamison added 24 points for the Wizards.

Jermaine O'Neal had 30 points, 13 rebounds and blocked five shots for the Pacers while Stephen Jackson picked up 29 points.

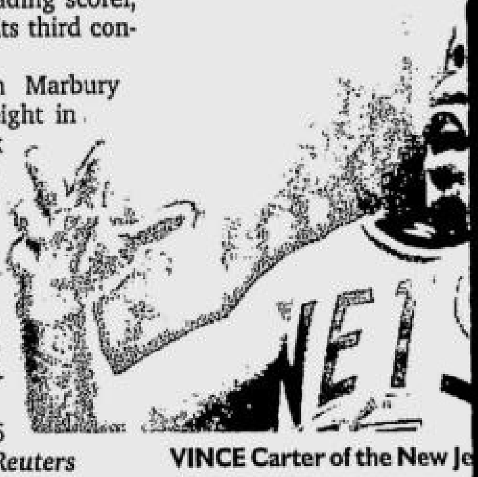
In Miami, Shaquille O'Neal posted 27 points and 14 rebounds and Eddie Jones scored 22 points as the Heat won, 105-96, to hand the Golden State Warriors their 10th straight road loss.

Dwyane Wade, the Heat's leading scorer, had 18 points as Miami seized its third consecutive win.

In Salt Lake City, Stephon Marbury grabbed 30 points, including eight in overtime, to help the New York Knicks edge the Utah Jazz, 102-99, for their first road win in 10 attempts.

Utah's Gordan Giricek recorded seven points and his last two from the free-throw line with less than a second to play sent the contest into overtime.

Andrei Kirilenko notched 25 points in a losing effort. *Reuters*



VINCE Carter of the New Je

MIAMI center Shaquille O'Neal (32) shoots over Golden State's Adonal Foyle (31). REUTERS

Malone sets decision day; Spurs stint likely

LOS ANGELES—If Karl Malone decides to play again, it probably will be for the San Antonio Spurs, his agent said Monday.

Malone will make an announcement about his future before the All-Star break. The All-Star game is on Feb. 20 in Denver.

"If he would choose to play, the likeliest candidate would be the Spurs, which is a team he almost played for a year and a half ago," Dwight Manley said. "He's already basically retired because he's not playing. That would be a big step for him, to essentially come out of quasi-retirement and play.

"There are two possibilities. He's leaned toward staying where he already is. Where he goes forward, only he knows. He'll say that real soon. I'm not in the job of speculating. It's out of my hands. It's going to be what it's going to be."

Manley said that the 41-year-old Malone, who underwent knee surgery last summer, is healthy and works out every day, but has not been playing basketball.

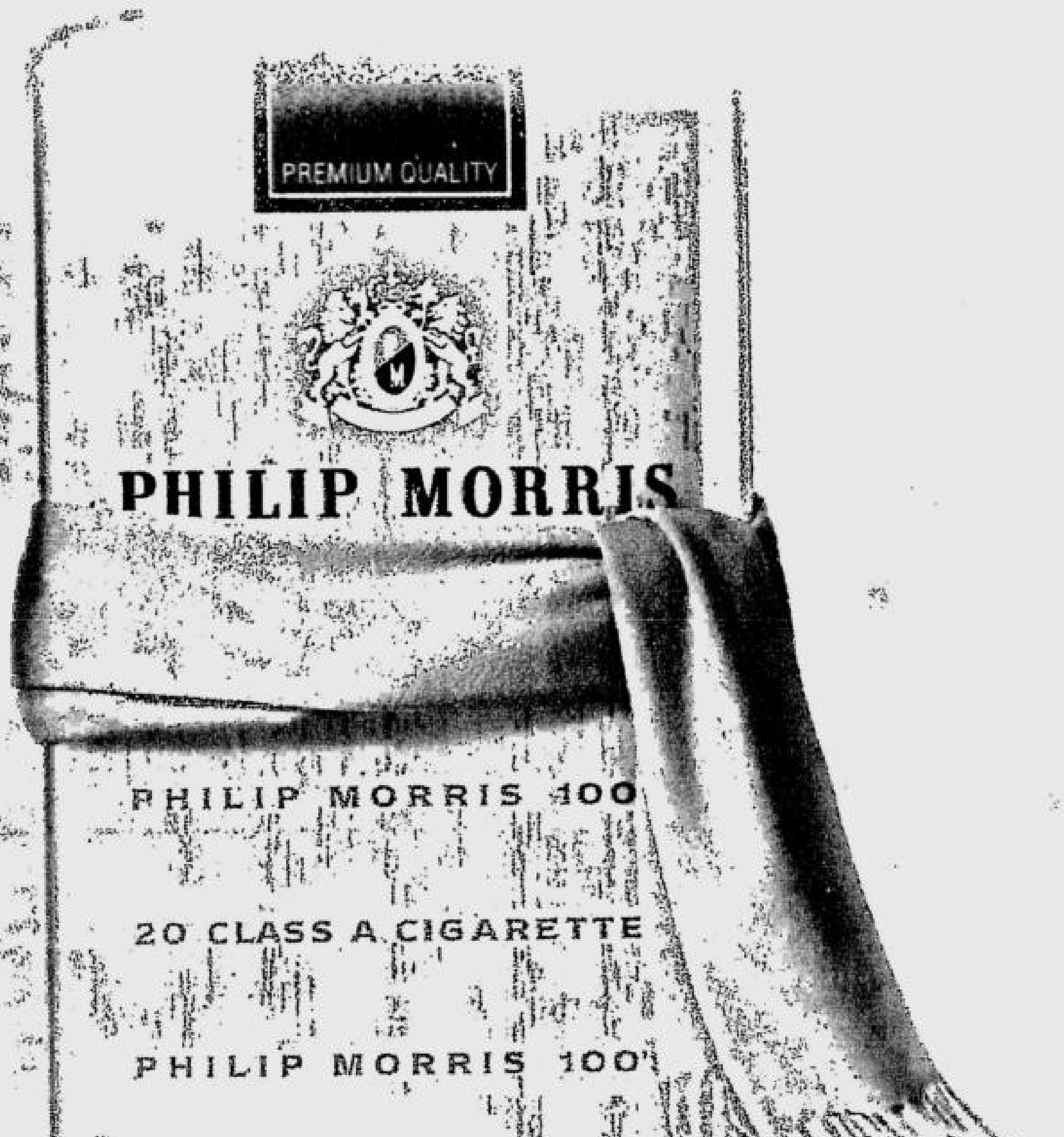
Malone was a key factor in the Lakers' victories over the Spurs in the Western Conference semifinals and the Minnesota Timberwolves in the conference finals.

Manley said in October that his client wasn't ready to play, but if he returned, it would only be with the Lakers.

That changed late last year after Malone was accused by Kobe Bryant of making a pass at his wife. Malone, through Manley, denied the accusation and apologized to Bryant and his wife for any remarks she might have considered inappropriate. *AP*

Roligon anniversary up

A BRAND-NEW Pajero tops the list of prizes when the P4-million Roligon 15th Anniversary 7-cock derby unfolds with more than 100 matches lined up in the event starting 3 p.m. Vying for the title are first day 3-pointers Boyet Plaza, Cong. Ronnie Puno, Neil Acebedo, Alex Bauan, Marianito Aguisanda, Boyet Catibog, Arthur Mangulabnan, Danny Polo, Abraham Bernales, Luis Villa and the Ampil & Baccud brothers. Other contenders are Charlie Espiritu, Jeric Junio, Dr. Ayong Lorenzo, Marcel Julao, Alex Tan, Noel Colet, Atty. Romero Yu and Tony Sy. The 3-door Pajero will be awarded to whoever pulls off the fastest kill in the event hosted by Rolly Ligon and backed by Thunderbird.



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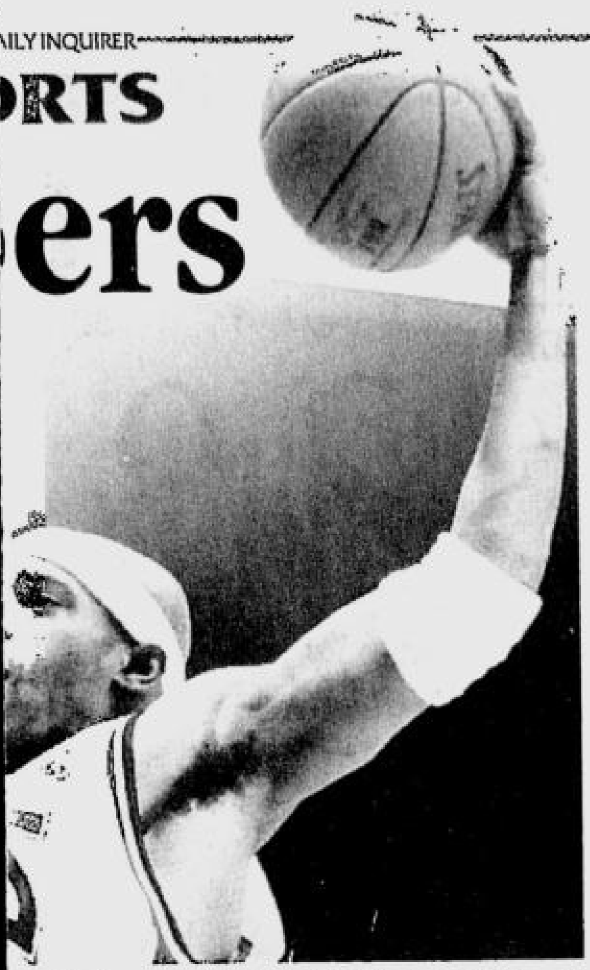

rsey Nets goes up high for a drive to the basket. AFP

Emphasis on winning drives Patriots

JACKSONVILLE, Florida—Deion Branch needed just five little words to explain why the New England Patriots have won three of the last four Super Bowls.

Asked Monday if he had any thoughts of leaving the team when he becomes a restricted free agent, the Super Bowl MVP replied: "My home is in Foxboro."

Then, referring to team owner Robert Kraft, Branch added: "I'm proud of the family that Mr. Kraft has built."

An emphasis on winning over money is what drives the Patriots to success in an era when free agency and the salary cap force major turnover at most teams each season.

Next season's Patriots certainly will be different than this season's. The biggest losses are not players but coaches: Offensive coordinator Charlie Weis is the new head coach at the University of Notre Dame, and defensive coordinator Romeo Crennel accepted the Cleveland Browns' head coaching job immediately after Sunday's game.

Crennel's move, which gives the NFL a record six black head coaches, was hardly a secret. As the Patriots' 24-21 win over Philadelphia was ending, coach Bill Belichick put his arms around his two top aides in a gesture of affection and appreciation.

They will be hard to replace.

"Romeo and Charlie have done a great job. A lot of the success we've had should go to them," Belichick said Monday. "I've been with them both a long time. I go back to 1981 with Romeo and I'll miss both of them a lot."

The Patriots might, too.

Next season, they will be seeking to become the first team to win three straight Super Bowls and the first to win four in five seasons.

The San Francisco 49ers came closest to three NFL titles in a row, winning the 1989 and 1990 Super Bowls, then losing the next NFC championship game on a last-second field goal by the New York Giants' Matt Bahr.

That New York team, which went on to beat Buffalo in the 1991 Super Bowl, had a coaching staff headed by Bill Parcells and included Belichick, Crennel and Weis, along with future NFL head coaches Tom Coughlin, Al Groh and Ray Handley. Two of the players on that team are also coaches and are reportedly on Crennel's wish list for his staff with the Browns: Pepper Johnson, New England's defensive line coach, and Maurice Carthon, the offensive coordinator in Dallas under Parcells.

Belichick's first order of business, therefore, is rebuilding his coaching staff, although he will take at least a week off, traveling to California for the AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am.

Most of the core players, however, should be back, although some are getting up there in age, notably linebacker Willie McGinest and safety Rodney Harrison, both of whom have played major roles in the team's success. Harrison, who had two interceptions in Sunday's game, will turn 33 next December, when McGinest will turn 34.

One member of the Patriots unlikely to return is cornerback Ty Law, who missed the second half of the season with a broken foot after quarreling with the team over his contract in training camp.

And while Belichick indicated that the team will spend the next few weeks renegotiating contracts for salary-cap purposes, Law's deal is unlikely to be among them. With rookie Randall Gay and second-year player Asante Samuel at cornerback, the Patriots obviously did well without him; after Eugene Wilson left the Super Bowl just before halftime with an arm injury, they played the second half with Harrison as the only regular starter in the secondary.

That's how the Patriots work—they always find someone to fill in without losing a step. *AP*

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Agassi plans Davis Cup comeback

NEW YORK—Andre Agassi will return to the US Davis Cup team after a five-year absence, The Associated Press learned on Monday.

The US Tennis Association planned to announce on Monday or Tuesday that Agassi will rejoin the squad for its first-round match against Croatia on March 4-6 at Carson, California, a tennis source told the AP on condition of anonymity.

The eight-time Grand Slam champion, who turns 35 in April, stopped playing Davis Cup after 2000 as part of a scaled-back schedule geared to peaking for the majors.

He was a member of three Davis Cup championship teams, going 30-5 in singles. US captain Patrick McEnroe traveled to Agassi's hometown of Las Vegas after the Australian Open to meet for dinner and try to persuade him to return to the team.

"Some of my greatest memories are playing Davis Cup," Agassi said last week in a conference call. "The regrets I have about not playing are regrets I've had for the last few years, and still remain that way, which is being a part of a new generation and trying to win the Davis Cup again."

The United States has won the competition a record 31 times, but not since 1995—the team's longest drought since the gap between titles in 1926 and 1937. The Americans lost to Spain in last year's Davis Cup final. *AP*

Marat sister slates duel vs Williams

PARIS—Dinara Safina of Russia defeated sixth-seeded Karolina Sprem of Croatia, 6-4, 6-2, in the first round of the $585,000 Open Gaz de France on Monday.

Safina, the sister of two-time Grand Slam winner Marat Safin, next plays top-seeded Serena Williams of the United States, the reigning Australian Open champion.

Also, seventh-seeded Silvia Farina Elia of Italy thumped Klara Koukalova of the Czech Republic, 6-0, 6-0. She next faces third-seeded Maria Sharapova, the Wimbledon champion.

Later Monday, Mary Pierce of France defeated Anabel Medina Garrigues of Spain 6-1, 6-2, and Stephanie Cohen-Aloro of France topped Maria Elena Camerin of Italy, 7-6 (5), 6-1. *AP*

RECORD VOYAGE: British sailor Ellen MacArthur clenches her fist in victory during her solo round-the-world record attempt. MacArthur broke the current 72 day, 22 hour, 54 minute and 22 second record of Francis Joyon by a little over a day. AP

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Litonjua, Wassmer rule Mango Tee; Iggy shoots 63

JUN Litonjua and Mike Wassmer got the big thing, the OV Espiritu-Tommy Manotoc tandem managed to keep one of their two titles and Iggy Clavecilla established a record round in the 21st Mango Tee, the member-guest invitational tournament of the Alabang Country Club held recently.

Litonjua and Wassmer, who both carried handicaps of 18, exploded for 86 big points on their last day to zoom past the clubhouse leaders and claim the overall net title with a 36-hole tally of 155 by just a point in the tourney presented by Smart Infiniti and Shell Velocity.

That late rally denied the bid of Chito Recto and Abe Avena to capture their second overall plum in four years. Their 154 total on rounds of 81-73 won them the Class B crown.

Espiritu and Manotoc were just too hot for the field in gross play as they finished seven points clear of the field. They conspired for 64 on the first day and 69 on the second for a 133 total.

After shooting himself in the foot in the first round, Clavecilla outdid himself on the final day. Partnered by Jojo Guingona, Clavecilla mastered the tough conditions with a nine under 63 that included a pitched-in eagle on the third and seven birdies that proved to be the lowest ever gross score in the event's long history.

"Everything just clicked. My confidence level was low after struggling in the first round and was really surprised with the way I played," said Iggy, who scored a medal 80 in the first round.

Since nobody from among the overflowing field of 640 players managed to score a hole-in-one, the four Mitsubishi vehicles (Montero and Grandis, Adventure and Lancer GLS) had to be driven back to Mitsubishi Motors Philippines, Inc. and Citimotors which put up the prizes as well as carts from Turf Co. (ClubCar) and Kart Plaza (Yamaha).

This year's Mango Tee was also supported by Taylor Made adidas/Golf Depot, F.E. Zuellig/Omega Watch, Sharp Philippines and Philippine Airlines as major sponsors, Ayala Greenfield Estate, Chinatrust, Foodlink and Standard Chartered as area sponsors and Airfreight 2100/Corporate Air Inc., Nescafe, Nestea, Pepsi Cola and Security Bank/Diners Club as premium sponsors.

The other winners were Buddy Velayo-Mari Hechanova in Class A, Peter Co-Jun Puno in Class C and Jose Ong-Popoy Flores in Class D. Velayo-Hechanova (146) beat Indren Naidoo-Lee Ho Gil by three, Recto-Avena prevailed over Willie Fernandez-Jun Engracia by three, Co-Puno (147) beat Cesar Velasco-Art Ampaya by two and Ong-Flores ended up in a tie with Rolando Carlos-Simon Sawit at 148 but won in the countback.

JUN Litonjua (second from left) and Mike Wassmer display their trophies as overall net champions. Looking on are Alabang Country Club president Fernando Balatbat and Julie Carceller of Smart Communications.

Konica Minolta Pro-Am tees off today at Riviera

By Musong Castillo

SILANG, Cavite—A huge field of 120 teams made up of the finest pros and the best amateurs in the land tee off at the start today of the Konica Minolta Pro-Am at the Riviera's Langer Course here.

Burly Gerard Cantada and partner JR Tanpinco shoot for a repeat of their title conquest last year in the alternate-shot tournament that has a total pot of P1.5 million.

Former president Fidel V. Ramos hit one of the ceremonial drives that formally kicked off the tournament yesterday before the Celebrity pro-am that followed.

The other special guests who took part in the ceremonial drives were Danny Isla of Toyota, Riviera president Danny Pizarro, Riviera chair Cesar Jayme and U-Bix president Bert Bravo.

Bravo then wished everyone in the field the best of luck.

This tournament is just in its fifth year, but it traces its roots to the 1950s when the event was known as the Bonifacio Pro-Am.

JESS YUSON
FVR hits one of the ceremonial drives of the Konica Minolta Pro-Am as U-Bix's Bert Bravo (left) looks on.

Scoring is not expected to be low in the four-day event that offers P200,000 to the winning pro, with the Bernhard Langer-designed layout demanding not only power but accuracy as well.

Most of those seeing action today played the course yesterday and got a sampling of how brutal the conditions can be as the winds blew hard and without letup.

Amateur ace Juvic Pagunsan and father Juanito also loom as threats, finishing second here twice before and now looking primed and ready to go all the way.

Professional players of the top 30 teams will earn cash prizes.

SPORTSWATCH

Hope Christian emerges top qualifier

DEFENDING champion Hope Christian High School repulsed Philadelphia High School, 73-69, to emerge top qualifier in their bracket at the end of the elimination stage of the 2nd Badel Powell Cup Inter-School Scout Basketball Tournament last Sunday. With the win, HCHS enters the semifinal round with a twice-to-beat advantage, along with Chiang Kai Shek College (CKSC) which topped the other bracket. CKSC met Philadelphia, while Hope Christian faced Sakya Academy yesterday in their crossover semifinal outing, with the winners meeting for the crown. The event, sponsored by the Filipino Chinese Scout Club, the Rotary Club of Bagumbayan, Tomas Yao and Gilbert Kua Yan Yee, features senior scouts from different Chinese-Filipino schools.

St. Scho stuns San Antonio de Padua

ST SCHOLASTICA'S College Manila shocked defending high school champion San Antonio de Padua College, 23-25, 25-19, 18-16, last Sunday to wrest the Group A lead in the 10th Milo BEST Women's Volleyball League (WVL) at the Ateneo Grade SChool courts in Quezon City. It was the third straight triumph for the St. Scho girls, who remained as one of only two unbeaten prep teams in the competitive level of the tourney organized by BEST Center and sponsored by Milo. De La Salle Lipa also stayed unscathed, crushing Southville International School, 25-23, 25-9, to show the way in Group B at 4-0. Colegio San Agustin tied idle De La Salle Lipa for the elementary (competitive) lead by posting its third win at the expense of Jose Abad Santos Memorial School, 25-18, 25-9.

7-cock derby championship round

BIG-TIME cockers and breeders clash anew tonight in the championship round of the Gentleman Cockers Association of the Philippines (GCAP) 7-Cock Derby at the air-conditioned Las Piñas Coliseum. Sponsor is Sagupaan Complexor 3000. It will be anybody's race for the title since only two participants posted perfect scores of three wins each last Monday: Tony Lasala (NML SP) and the team of James Uy, William Go and Alan Siaco (JU-AS WG Listana). With 2.5 points each are JDL of Boyet Legazpi and Bobbit Pies and Winning Time Jobo of Rudy Salud and Lito Orillaza. With two points apiece are Dini and Dante (Dini Cuenca), Ripper 777 (Art Perez), TR Selection (Tito Reyes), Against All Odds (Gerry Ramos) and Bacolor Gold entry. With 1.5 points are *sabong* idol Patrick Antonio (Sabong Pinoy Live and Complexor 3000), Gov. Ito Ynares (Binangonan) and engineer Tony Marfori (MGM Milky Wing Strike). Meanwhile, Las Piñas Coliseum's regular hackfight is scheduled at noon today until 6 p.m. For inquiries, contact 873-1040 and 874-3910. Coliseum manager Alex Tobias said LPC's hackfight schedule is from Monday to Sunday.

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Race 4—1. Great Tower 2. Astimegoesby 3. Skip Away 4. Saving Grace
Race 5—1. King's Choice 2. Perfect Harry 3. Lady in Red 4. Gold Pyramid/Overture
Race 6—1. Sir Benjo 2. Solid North 3. Loaded 4. Princess Gillian
Race 7—1. Speed Majesty 2. Bunker Buster 3. Nitty Gritty 4. Namaste 5. Jazz in Time
Race 8—1. Shure Bull 2. Conglomerate 3. Vice Free 4. Another Sam 5. Mr. Bonjing 6. Homerun King

Wie earns British Open exemption

LONDON—Teenage prodigy Michelle Wie will this year play in her first Women's British Open on a special exemption, the Ladies' Golf Union (LGU) said on Monday.

Hawaiian schoolgirl Wie, 15, is one of five amateurs invited to compete at the fourth and final women's major of the season, to be staged at Royal Birkdale in Southport, England, from July 28-31 July.

"We have followed Michelle's development over the last two years with great interest and admiration and in particular her performance in major championships," LGU chief executive Andy Salmon said in a statement.

"We have no doubt that she is ready to compete with the world's best players at Royal Birkdale." Wie, who narrowly failed to make the cut in last year's Sony Open playing alongside the men on the PGA event, will be making her second competitive appearance in Britain.

Last year, she helped the United States clinch a 10-8 victory over Britain and Ireland in the Curtis Cup amateur team competition at Formby Golf Club in north-west England.

Wie will play in all four majors this year, having already accepted invitations to take part in the Nabisco Championship in Rancho Mirage, California from March 24-27 and the LPGA Championship in Havre de Grace, Maryland from June 9-12.

She was already exempt for the US Women's Open, to be played at Cherry Hills Village, Colorado from June 23-26, after tying for 13th in last year's tournament.

Wie's best finish in a major was fourth at last year's Nabisco Championship. *Reuters*

1st German's Cup set at Filinvest Alabang

THE SOUTHERN Luzon German Shepherd Dog Association will hold its 1st Gentleman's Cup II/7th SLGSDA Landesgruppen Siegen Show on Feb. 13 at the Filinvest Alabang grounds along Commerce Avenue Spectrum in Muntinlupa City.

SLGSDA officers, headed by chair Edrich Cabrera, president Francis Lumunsad and vice presiden Bebot Lao have invited a top German SV judge to scrutinize and render judgment on the dogs.

The event is being supported by Pagcor, Smart Communications, Thunderbird Unilab, Gardenia Bread, Filinvest Alabang Inc., The Palms Country Club, Promac, Eukanuba, Timberland, Sports Unlimited, Happy Dog, Mister Donut and Rhino Brand Leaf Tea for men.

"With these companies, SLGSDA is more than ready to move forward with their 2005 series," GSDF chair lawyer Jose A. Sibal said.

"We are expecting no less than 150 entries from Cebu, Iloilo, Bacolod, Batangas, Laguna, Central and Northern Luzon as well as the National Capital Region," said director/vice president/secretary Alex Samaniego.

The event will be covered by Sports Unlimited through Ms Dyan Castillejo-Garcia. Gardenia Bread will provide giveaways for all registrants and show winners.

All puppy class (3-6/6-9/9-12 months) will start at 8:30 a.m. while the intermediate, young, and open class kick off at 1:30 p.m. after the obedience and protection exhibition of highly trained German Shepherd dogs.

For inquiries, call 7218345, 7217152, 09209209261 and 09189306078.

SLGSDA officials responsible for the 1st Gentleman's Cup II. Seated are Mon Sison, Edrich Cabrera, Francis Lumunsad. Standing are Dr. Rey Valenzuela, Bebot Lao, Ruel Duque, Alex Samaniego, Wes Puno, Jeff Valencia, Wilson Sy and Jeff Margali. Absent is Jewel Castellar.

Agonizing with Ginebra's Rommel Adducul

BARE EYE

Recab Trinidad

(BAGUIO CURE: Still scared of meningo? That's the problem of Baguio City Mayor Braulio Yaranon, who's hosting a rich, one-day cycling race in the summer capital on Feb. 14, Valentine's Day. It will be called the 2005 Panagbenga Classic, a 205-kilometer Baguio-to-Baguio chase that will snake through La Union (Marcos Highway), Agoo, Aringay, Caba, Naguilian, Burgos, Pugo and Rosario. Race director Jess Garcia Jr. said they hope to enliven tourism in the Pines City which had suffered following the meningo scare. Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit has already cleared Baguio of the killer disease, claimed Cycling Jess, the reason he's helping stage the cycling event to encourage visitors to pay the usual summer visit. The P100,000 one-lap Valentine's cycling classic has lured top national riders like Arnel Quirimit, Warren Davadilla, Victor Espiritu, Lloyd Reynante and 2004 Tour rookie of the year Baler Ravina Jr. of the Pitaki team.)

***

THE agony will be hard to forget.

If the Talk 'N Text team goes on to win the PBA Philippine Cup, Rommel Adducul's painful trips to the foul line would be the topic of hilarious discussion.

Fans may not be unanimous on the impending verdict. But there would be countless basketball devotees who would single out Adducul as the unwilling culprit.

Unwilling because, as often as he gets a free scoring opportunity after being fouled, Adducul detests reporting to the foul line.

Not because he had shaved his armpit.

The reason is no longer a secret to this basketball-crazy nation.

Adducul cannot shoot straight free throws.

***

Well, the importance of the foul shot cannot be over-emphasized.

Games could be lost, or won (as in the case of Danny Florencio in the 1967 Asian Basketball Confederation (ABC) championship) on the foul line.

Of course, Ginebra coach Siot Tanquincen is aware that, if the situation presents itself, his rival could opt to send Adducul to the foul line in exchange for an open field attempt.

In boxing, it could be as simple as tagging the foe in his weakest spot, either the glassy chin or the thin tummy.

It's silly but coach Siot could not do anything.

He could not immediately correct or cure the malady.

***

Of course, they haven't given up on Mr. Adducul.

In fact, erstwhile Ginebra coach Allan Caidic, now the team manager, said he got terribly alarmed that he decided to see Adducul in a previous team workout.

So what did he do to remedy the crippling defect?

Caidic, with a tested doctorate on sweet shooting, did try to lend Adducul some pointers.

Unfortunately, the loaned sharpness was not put to a test in Ginebra's last outing.

Instead, Ginebra fans who came in droves to the Big Dome ended up with one sour suspicion on Sunday.

They started swearing the foul-shooting malady hobbling Adducul has turned contagious.

***

That's very dangerous.

Last heard of, the affliction had visibly stalked Ginebra team pillar Eric Menk.

Now, can you imagine Mark Caguioa, who exploded for a record 43 points last Sunday, falling prey to the Adducul syndrome?

It's has started to get frightening.

The best-of-seven title series, tied at 2-all, could suddenly deteriorate into a tasteless mismatch.

If the Phone Pals, indeed, would win it, they should be able to do it from the backcourt, where they enjoy a tremendous edge. (Take a bow Willy Miller, Jimmy Alapag.)

This is a great series that should not be won on the foul line, please.

***

So here's what I did.

I called up Caidic yesterday and he promised to go back to the Ginebra team practice to deliver a few pointers.

He was given some tips which, at best, should be nothing but quack advice.

For the record, this cure has been tried with amusing success on several backyard leaguers.

Caidic, sounding both pleased and sincere, said he would try the remedy on Adducul.

There's nothing much to it actually.

It simply focused on breathing, the principle of using a single heave or vial, to help lessen the load on the shooting shoulder.

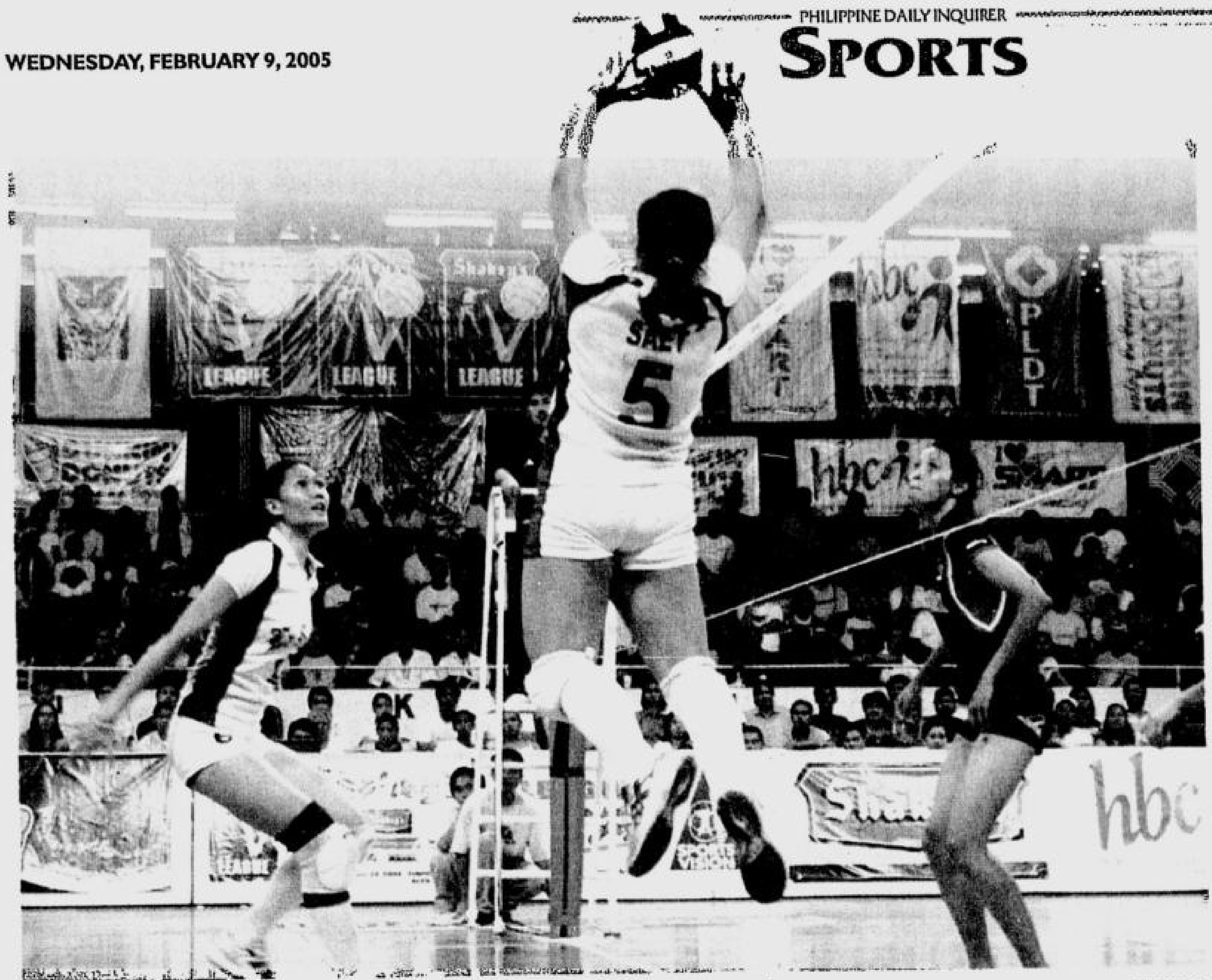
The idea is to prevent Adducul from resorting to a shot-put hurl.

He must not be made to aim for the basket as though he was throwing an iron ball.

We also suggested the principle of single motion, taking a deep breath, all the way down to the navel, to propel the attempt.

In case you're wondering, the tips were culled from the teachings of Hall-of-Famer Ed McCauley and the invisible kung-fu master Shakespeare Chan.

Warning: This is no certification it could work on Adducul.



REIEA Ferina Saet sets up teammate Maureen Penetrante for a spike in yesterday's match.

REM ZAMORA

La Salle whips Letran

Gains Shakey's V-League volley finals vs UST

GAMES TOMORROW
(*Rizal Memorial Coliseum*)
1:30 p.m.—PSC vs Letran
3:30 p.m.—La Salle vs UST

By Musong R. Castillo

THERE was no La Salle fold-up this time. The old fiery Lady Archers' attack was evident throughout.

Foiled on its bid the last time out, La Salle dominated Letran like it used to, scoring a 25-23, 25-16, 25-17 victory yesterday and arranging a keenly-awaited rematch with University of Santo Tomas for the Shakey's V-League second conference crown at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

Michelle Carolino came away with an awesome game, peppering the Lady Knights with 19 hits on her way to a 23-point performance to power the Lady Archers to the victory in their best-of-three series, 2-1.

Maureen Penetrante backed her up with 10 points while four others combined for 22 markers as La Salle redeemed itself from its five-set loss to Letran last Sunday that forced the do-or-die match for the second finals berth.

La Salle took Game One, 25-20, 25-16, 25-17.

UST, which beat La Salle to capture the inaugural tournament of this event sponsored by Shakey's Pizza last year, clinched the first championship slot with a 2-0 sweep of guest team Philippine Sports Commission.

Game One of the best-of-three title series is set at 3:30 p.m. tomorrow after the 1:30 clash for third between PSC and Letran.

Letran drew 19 points from Cherry Rose Macatangay, but the rest failed to display the same form and resiliency they showed in coming from two sets down to steal a 14-25, 22-25, 25-19, 25-13, 15-11 victory that snapped a stirring 12-game run by La Salle Sunday.

Joan Botor-Carpio, Bangladesh Pantaleon and Dianne Diaz , who pooled 38 big points among themselves two days ago, could only come up with a combined 17-point effort yesterday, which told heavily on the Lady Knights' upset bid.

The tournament is co-presented by Dunkin Donuts, HBC Home of Beauty Exclusives, Smart and PLDT with Mikasa and Accel as official volleyball and outfitter, respectively.

Dableo joins Tanauan tilt

ASIAN 3.2a zonal champion GM-candidate Ronald Dableo has confirmed his participation in the 1st Tanauan Chess Open-Mayor's Cup on March 4-5 in Tanauan, Batangas.

"This (Tanauan Open) will serve as my training tournament for the Asian Continental Chess Tournament in Cochi, India," said Dableo, who is again eyeing a seat in the World Chess Championships.

Asia's first grandmaster Eugene Torre, GM-candidate Mark Paragua, GM-candidate Jayson Gonzales, GM-candidate Ronald "Onat" Bancod, IM Idelfonso Datu and US Master Rico Salimbagat of Tanuan City have also registered.

The event dangles a cash prize fund of P200,000, the largest for a two-day Active Chess tournament in the country's history with the champion getting the lion share of P100,000 plus trophy. The second placer receives P40,000; third, P20,000; fourth, P10,000; fifth, P5,000; 6th-10th, P2,000 each; and 11th-20th, P1,000 each.

Cash prizes and Chess Asia publications will also be awarded to the top performers in the Under-2000, Under-1800 and Under-1600 ratings category.

The event, to be held at the Speaker Jose B. Laurel Memorial Gymnasium in Tanauan City, is being organized by the Active Chess Center of Asia (ACCA) with the support of the First Asia Institute and the city government of Tanauan. It is sanctioned by the National Chess Federation of the Philippines.

A registration fee of P750 and a default fee of P250 will be charged to each participant. Membership with the NCFP is required.

Registration is being accepted at the First Asia Institute, #2 President Laurel Highway, Tanauan City, Batangas with tels. (043) 778-0656 and 778-1529 loc 106 (ask for Daniel Darusin) or at the ACCA (ask for Susan Manalo), 6th Floor PDCP Bank Centre, Leviste corner Rufino Streets, Salcedo Village, Makati City or call 0918-6966581; e-mail:acca@info.com.ph. *NM Marlon Bernardino, Contributor*

Palawan chess Open tournament slated

EVERYTHING is set for the 2005 Palawan Chess Open Tournament to be held on Feb.27 to March 2 at the Puerto Princesa City Coliseum.

The tournament, which is sponsored by Puerto Princesa City Mayor Edward Hagedorn and Vice Mayor Lucilo Bayron, coincides with the city's fiesta celebrations dubbed as "Araw ng Puerto Princesa City."

National Chess Federation of the Philippines vice president and Palawan Provincial Administrator lawyer Romeo Seratubias said the tournament hopes to discover future chess masters.

The champion will get the lion's share of P30,000. The runner-up will receive P20,000, the third placer P15,000, the fourth placer P10,000 and the fifth placer P7,000. The sixth to 10th placers will also receive P5,000, P3,000, P2,000 and P1,000, respectively.

For inquiries, call or text tournament director and Puerto Princesa Chess Association (PPCA) president NM Renato "Rene" Seratubias at (0921) 5589516.

NM Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

PFF/Adidas men's football kicks off in San Carlos City

THE ANNUAL 2005 PFF/Adidas National Men's Championship kicks off today with the Visayas-leg to be played out from Feb. 9-11 in San Carlos City, Negros Occidental.

Cebu, Iloilo, Negros Oriental and Negros Occidental make up Group C of the tournament that will be played at the San Julio Realty football fields. Hosts for this Visayas qualifying round of the country's premiere men's event are the Negros Occidental Football Association (NOFA) of which Representative Carlos Cojuangco is president and the San Carlos City government of Mayor Eugenio Jose V. Lacson.

The top two teams of the group will qualify for the National finals that will be staged on the first week of March in Cagayan de Oro City.

Tournament director is Pablito Araneta, chairman of the Competitions Committee of the Philippine Football Federation (PFF). Special guests in today's opening include PFF president Johnny Romualdez, Vice Mayor Gerardo Valmayor, Luis Dizon of the City Sports Committee and Mari Mendezona, general secretary of NOFA.

It is also supported by PFF sponsor-partners like Super Ferry, Red Ribbon Bakeshop and Petron.

Ateneo booters widen UAAP lead

ATENEO'S rampaging Blu-booters dumped University of the East, 4-0, to widen its lead over UST in Sunday's UAAP matches at the Loyola Heights fields.

With 16 points to its credit, the Eagles now need only one more victory to be assured of the twice-to-beat 1st place position.

In other matches Sunday, UST tied FEU, the only team to beat Ateneo thus far, 1-1, while DLSU squeaked past UP, 1-0.

After a disappointing 2-1 loss the previous week to FEU, courtesy of an injury-time goal by the Tamaraws, Ateneo poured it on early against UE by jumping to a 3-0 first half margin.

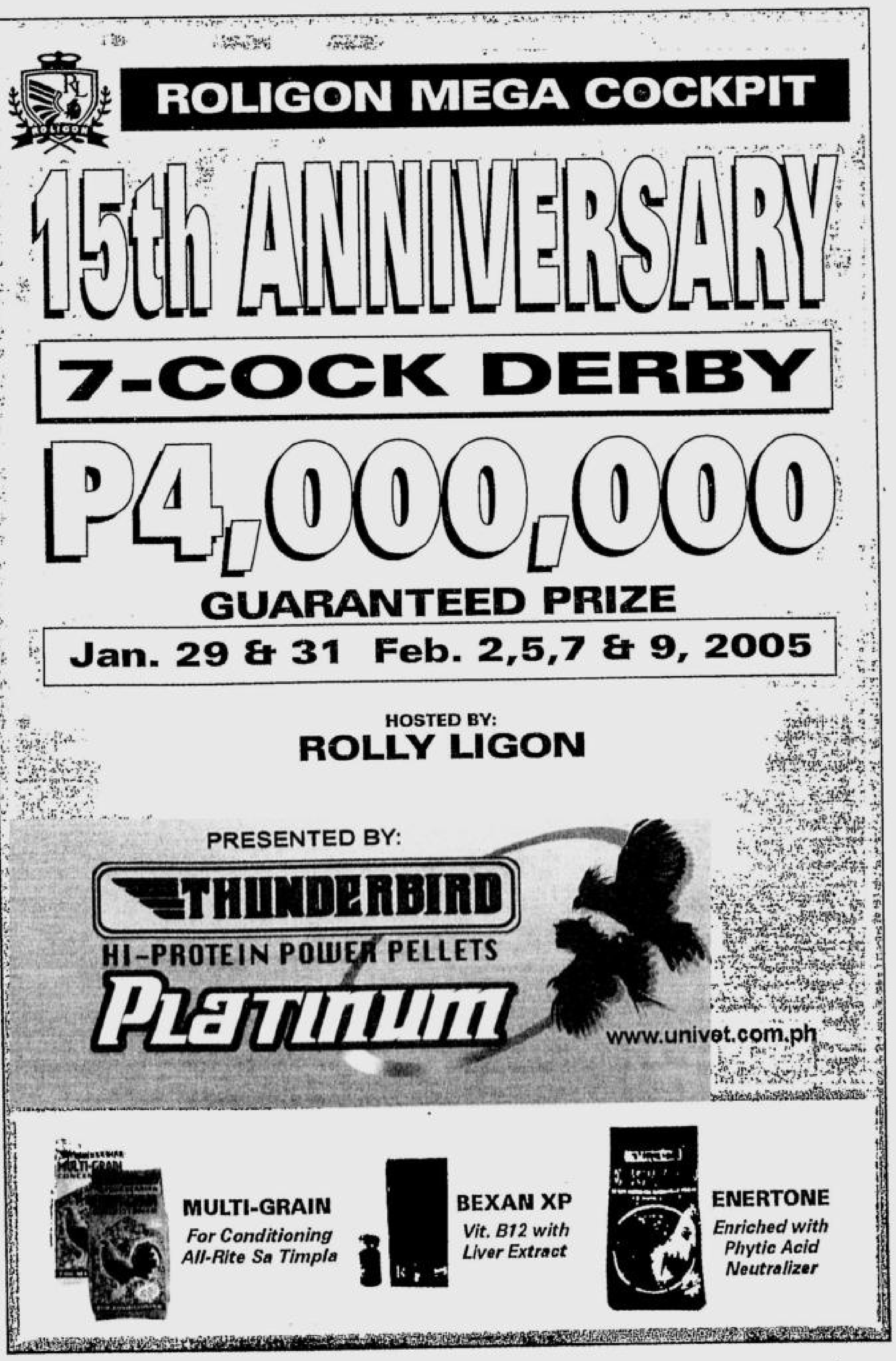
In the end, Roger Lastimado had netted twice for the Eagles while the backline performed flawlessly to blank the Red Warriors.

Nonnoy Carpio's second-place Goldies scored first on a goal by Lapitan in the 40th of the 2nd half. Just when victory seemed certain, Orlando Plagata's Tamaraws marked through Magbalon in injury time.

The tie left UST, DLSU and FEU in a tight race for 2nd place behind Ateneo with 10 points each and three matches left.

On the distaff side, the two favored teams beat their rivals as FEU blanked UP, 2-0, and La Salle thumped Ateneo, 4-0, also at Loyola Heights on Sunday.

THE CHINESE Filipino Business Club recently held its third CFBC Invitational golf tournament at Sta. Elena Golf and Country Club in celebration of the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Philippines and the people's Republic of China. Photo shows former president Fide V. Ramos, PROC Ambassador Wu Hongbo, Myanmar Ambassador U Tin Htun, CFBC president Rufino Ko Pio with the participants.



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SPORTS

JUDOKA Melvin Magata raises his new training shoes given by First Gentleman Mike Arroyo and PSC OIC William Ramirez (center) at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium. RAFFY LERMA

First Gent exhorts RP athletes to go 'the Chinese way'

By Marc Anthony Reyes

TRAIN in China and celebrate in Hong Kong.

First Gentleman Mike Arroyo yesterday exhorted some 400 national athletes to go "the Chinese way" in the quest to finally win the overall championship in the Southeast Asian Games slated here on Nov. 27 to Dec. 5.

The pep rally, held at noon at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium, officially kicked off the preparation for the SEAG where athletes from 10 sports disciplines will be sent to mainland China to train under strict Chinese supervision.

"I know that everyone of you will win a gold medal, because of the training you will get in China," Arroyo told the athletes. "Let's do it the Chinese way."

The First Gentleman also raised the possibility of giving every gold medal winner in the SEAG a bonus trip to Hong Kong.

"Maybe, we can take the gold medalists to Hong Kong for a vacation," he said to the delight of the athletes, who were treated to lunch with Arroyo and officials of the Philippine Sports Commission.

Arroyo had earlier spearheaded the pledging session among top corporations, raising P160 million for the preparation of the national athletes, including their foreign trips and equipment.

"Whatever you do, it won't be for me," the First Gentleman said. "It won't be for President (Gloria Macapagal) Arroyo. Whatever you will do, will be for the good of the country."

Arroyo also challenged the athletes to win no less than 120 gold medals against SEAG heavyweights Vietnam, Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia.

Athletes from wushu, gymnastics, archery, athletics, basketball, weightlifting, swimming, boxing, table tennis and badminton will undergo training under Chinese coaches there through the RP-China partnership project.

The partnership with the global sporting superpower was recently revived during the visit of Arroyo, PSC officer-in-charge Butch Ramirez and FG Foundation liaison Butch Tuason in China last week.

The Philippines, which finished fourth overall two years ago in Vietnam with 49 gold medals to show, has not won the overall title in the SEAG. When the country last hosted the Games in 1991, the country lost to Indonesia, 92-91, in the gold medal race.

SPORTS TV

Compiled by L. Manguiat

BASKETBALL: US NCAA—Boston College vs Notre Dame; 8 a.m.; Kansas vs Nebraska; 10 a.m. (r); Pittsburgh vs West Virginia; 3:30 p.m.; Notre Dame vs Syracuse; 5:30 p.m. (r); ESPN—Get your fill of US college basketball.

NBA—Warriors vs Magic; 8 a.m. (r-7 p.m.); Sports Plus; Jazz vs Nuggets; 10 a.m. (r-9 p.m.); Solar Sports—Golden State visits the Magic Kingdom in Orlando while Northwest Division rivals Utah and Denver tangle in Colorado.

FOOTBALL: Asian World Cup Qualifiers; 6:25 p.m. and 11:30 p.m.; STAR Sports—Japan takes on Korea while Bahrain meets Iran for a chance to play in next year's World Cup.

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

Baguio available again for Nationals' training

BAGUIO CITY—The government's P200-billion deficit has reduced the Philippine hosting budget for the South East Asian Games this year, according to Roberto Pagdanganan, head of the Philippine organizing committee.

But the progress made in containing meningococcemia in Baguio has eased this fiscal burden because the city is available again for training athletes, he said here on Saturday.

The Philippine Sports Commission maintains a training oval at Teachers Camp here, but athletes have been wary about spending the next six months here due to the meningococcemia scare.

The city is also in charge of an Olympic-sized swimming pool, which has been rarely used because of logistical problems.

Pagdanganan, a former tourism secretary, said the meningococcemia crisis was overblown. He said the Philippine International Trading Corp., which he chairs, filled the medical supply gaps Baguio was suffering between December and January, guaranteeing the city a fresh supply of antibiotics for half its commercial value.

Pagdanganan said the government has decided to "spread the cost" of running this year's SEA Games by distributing events to key cities willing to subsidize most of the expenses. It has allocated P30 million for the games. Additional P50 million was given as the committee's infrastructure allowance.

This budget is only 4 percent of what Vietnam, the previous SEA Games host, had invested, Pagdanganan said.

"[This] is why we're choosing venues where we don't have to spend a lot of money," he said.

Vietnam also raised the MyDihn Stadium where the previous SEA Games was held.

"We're spreading the venues to promote the country, and minimize the cost of operations. [The government needs] P850 million, including venue preparations, but we are able to cut it by a half [to] P500,000," Pagdanganan said.

The rest of the budget is being sourced from big businesses.

Cebu City is hosting the mountain bike tournament, at the behest of Lanao Mayor Lito Durano, while Bacolod City is facilitating the men's football games as well as the weightlifting tournament, Pagdanganan said.

The Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority is hosting archery while Makati City and Marikina City have each offered to foot venue logistics for urban-located events like basketball.

Baguio, however, lost its bid to host the golfing matches, after only recently emerging from the meningococcemia scare.

"Authorities are not interested [to invest in Baguio golf]," Pagdanganan said, because ferrying athletes to the summer capital would be far more expensive.

Pagdanganan added that the SEA Games require facilities that pass international standards.

The Baguio government is debating whether to privatize its PSC-financed swimming pool because of a construction lapse that left out time-recording equipment when the pool was completed.

Without a time pad, the pool may not pass global sports standards, said Melchor Tagayona, the city's only lifeguard. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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Golden Wheel Award fetes top race drivers

THE BIGGEST names in Philippine motorsports converge as the 2nd Golden Wheel Award pays tribute to the top race drivers tonight at the Manila Polo Club.

Highlighting the event sponsored by Pilipinas Shell, Toyota Phils., PCSO-Casino Filipino and San Miguel in cooperation with Denso, Bridgestone, Standard Insurance and Caltex is the awarding of the most prestigious Golden Wheel Driver of the Year Award.

Hosting the Golden Wheel Awards night are Popong Andolong and Pia Boren.

Part of the Golden Wheel ceremonies is the awarding of trophies to the overall champions in Shell Karting, and the 2004 PCSO-Shell Grand Prix—Philippine National Touring Car Championships, 2004 Shell Advance Superbikes Series, Formula Toyota, 2004 Yokohama Miata Cup, the Ducati Cup, Ford Lynx Cup and the Philippine National Formula 3 Championship.

The Golden Wheels Awards was launched last year to pay tribute to the top achievers in the field of motorsports and inspire these drivers to further hone their skills.

Three standouts shared the honor as 2004 Golden Wheel Drivers of the Year—Asian Motocross champion Glenn Aguilar of Caltex Revtex, Asian Formula 3 champion Pepon Marave and Asian Open Karting champion Michelle Bumgarner of Standard Insurance.

Bumgarner and Aguilar were again nominated for the prestigious award this year for their feats in Asian karting and Asian motocross, respectively.

The other strong contenders are Jolet Jao (Shell Motorcycle roadbikes), Vip Isada and navigator Aries Ilagan (rally), Alex Perez (rallycross), Nelson Pamintuan (drag racing), Daryl Flores (Slalom), Timtom Gempesaw (4x4 Off-Road), Jody Coseteng (National Touring Car), Ivan Carapiet (Formula Toyota), Tyson Sy (Formula 3) and Matteo Guidicelli (Shell Karting).

All these 13 drivers are actually champions in their respective fields of motorsports, making them candidates for the prestigious award.

BUMGARNER: Leading candidate. PDI PHOTO

The Awards Committee, led by Golden Wheel chair Johnny Tan, admitted they had a hard time choosing this year's awardee or awardees based on the impact of their feats here and abroad.

Aguilar bagged his ninth national motocross crown and also wound up runner-up to Japanese Tadakazu Ohtsuka in the 2004 FIM UAM Asian Motocross Championship.

Bumgarner made the country proud anew when she emerged Asian Karting Champion for the third straight year despite stronger challenge from the Indonesians.

Guidicelli reigned supreme in the local karting scene with his historic feat of winning two titles—the premiere Open class and the Rotax Max Juniors class—in one season while Sy was the top Filipino achiever in the Asian Formula 3.

Japanese judokas holding seminar

NINE Japanese former Olympic judo champions are coming to Manila tomorrow to hold a seminar at the Philippine Amateur Judo Association gym at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

Led by delegation head Saburo Yonezawa, the Japanese belonging to West Japan Businessmen Judo Federation comprising Tokyo, Osaka and Nagoya, will also discuss coaching, officiating and techniques.

Editor **Louie C. Camino**
Assistant Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**

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The Davos Star

RICHARD Gere listens to a discussion about AIDS

Gere: 'God created man because He loves stories. It is our job to make the stories meaningful… by caring for each other'

By Isagani Yambot
Publisher

THE STARS shone bright in Davos, Switzerland, late last month, and they shone for a worthy cause—to focus the world's attention on the problems of poverty, hunger and disease and help raise funds for the alleviation of these problems.

Celebrities from the political, business, social, cultural and show biz worlds took the limelight for the entire six days of the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum.

Probably without her meaning to, Hollywood actress Sharon Stone ("Basic Instinct," "Catwoman") became the high-profile celebrity at the conference. At one panel discussion on funding the war on poverty, Stone suddenly stood up and said she was donating $10,000 to the campaign to eradicate malaria in Tanzania. The president of Tanzania, Benjamin Mkapa, one of the panel members, smiled broadly when he heard this.

Stone's pledge was immediately followed by another: A businessman announced he was donating $50,000 for the same cause. At the end of the discussion, about 30 more people had stood up and made pledges totaling $1 million.

Seeing Sharon Stone, Richard Gere and Lionel Richie at the World Economic Forum and witnessing another aspect of super-celebrity

Karaoke cocktail

The actress later attended a cocktail-karaoke party for media leaders. Angelina Jolie, recently rumored to be the cause of the breakup between Brad Pitt and Jennifer Aniston, was scheduled to join the media men at the cocktails later that night, but this reporter had to write a story and missed the chance to hobnob with her.

On Jan. 28, Richard Gere, actor and president of Gere Foundation USA, and Lionel Richie, pop music superstar, received the WEF's 2005 Crystal Awards in recognition of their support for humanitarian causes.

Klaus Schwab, WEF founder and executive chair, said that the idea for the Crystal Awards came from violinist Yehudi Menuhin 10 years ago. Menuhin suggested that artists who used their art to reach out to other cultures, or do something noteworthy for humanity, should be given formal recognition.

Schwab said Gere had become known internationally for his social activism and philanthropy, using his celebrity as an actor and his resources to call attention to a number of global issues. For a long time now, Schwab added, Gere had supported humanitarian aid, human rights and cultural preservation organizations, including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and Survival International.

Gere is also committed to the search for a cure for AIDS. In 1992, he hosted World AIDS Day at the United Nations. He has led in the effort to create a coalition of government, business, entertainment, health care and NGO leaders to fight the AIDS epidemic in India.

Richie has sold nearly 100 million albums and notched 22 Top10 hits—13 of them during an astonishing swing between 1981 and 1987. Five Grammy Awards, an Oscar, stacks of American Music Awards and People's Choice Awards grace his shelves. He is the only one, besides Irving Berlin, to have scored No. 1 hits in nine consecutive years.

He is best remembered for the song "We Are the World," which he co-wrote with Michael Jackson. With Quincy Jones as producer, 45 musical stars recorded "We Are the World" on Jan. 28, 1985. It soon became the anthem of an international campaign to raise funds for Ethiopian famine victims.

In his album "Time," Richie addresses some of the issues that have concerned the world since his grandmother's time—racial tensions, unemployment and the economy.

He has worked in the areas of hunger and education. He has been involved particularly in problems in Asia. He assists black universities in the United States and co-created the Citizen School program 20 years ago. He is now busy setting up the Lionel Richie One World Peace Foundation.

Simplicity as key

Richie believes that a hit song is one that is rendered with great craft, conveys simple ideas that are heartfelt and resonate with listeners of any age, race, creed or nationality. Thus, his hits "All Night Long," "Hello" and "Endless Love."

"I want to find the simplest phrase that everybody says, no matter what language you speak," he says. He says things the way people say them, using melodies that the people can sing. "Simplicity," he says, "is the key to what I do."

Despite his celebrity, Richie remains a simple, unassuming man. On the night the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum began, we saw him alight from his limousine to register at the registration center. He was accompanied by only two friends; he had no airs, he proceeded straightaway to the registration desk, made no fuss and created no stir. At first I thought to myself, "This man looks like Lionel Richie." I did a double take and, indeed, he was Richie. I was so dumbstruck that I failed to greet him or ask for his autograph.

THE DAVOS STAR/ A2-2

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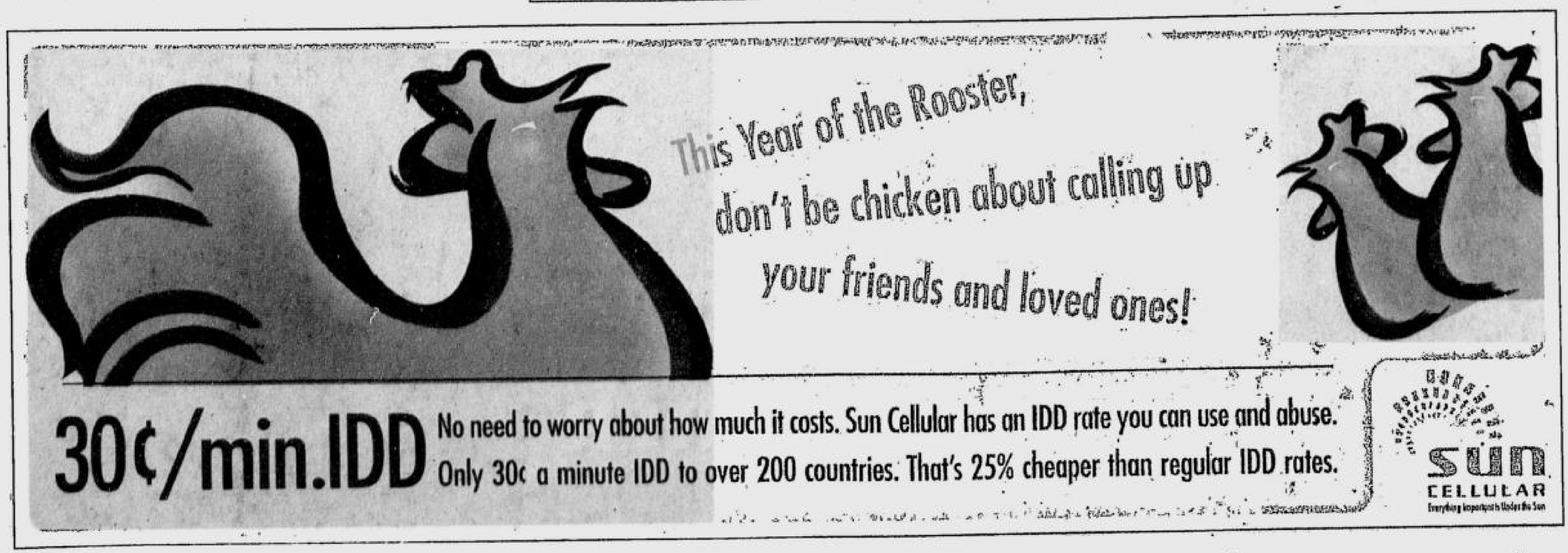
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The Davos Star

From page A2-1

At the Crystal Awards, Gere said he was moved by the recognition. He said he felt unworthy of the award given in the presence of President Aleksander Kwasniewski of Poland and President Viktor Yuschenko of Ukraine, who had spoken about their hopes for their respective countries' future.

Gere recalled a Jewish story that said God created people because He loved stories. The actor said the forum participants represented more than 1,000 different stories.

"It is our job to make these stories meaningful," he said, "and we make them meaningful by caring for each other."

He said he was accepting the award not so much for anything that he had accomplished, but for the one million Tibetans who had died, the six million who remain in Tibet, the 40 million people living with HIV/AIDS and the 20 million who have so far died of the disease.

Tears for Tibet

Recently Gere, a Buddhist, held an exhibit of photos of Tibet. In an interview, he said, "Tibet exists on many levels. All of them heartbreakingly real. It is the pure land dreamscape of gods and goddesses. It is our last living link to the ancient wisdom civilizations and their hard-won knowledge of the vast and profound secrets of the human heart and mind."

He continued: "Tibet is also the scene of one of the most brutal tragedies of our time. Since the Chinese invasion of Tibet in 1950, 1.2 million Tibetans have died and one of our most remarkable and developed cultures is on the verge of extinction."

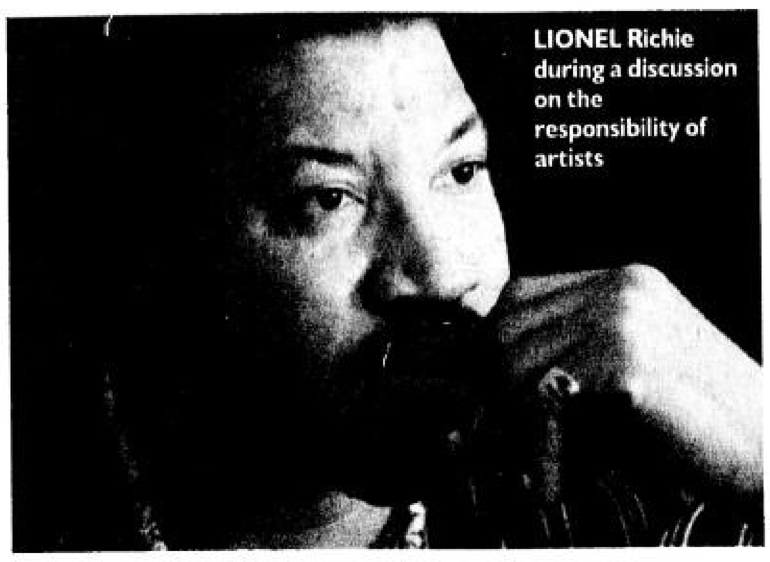
Richie said that after hearing the two presidents, he recalled his college days when his economics professor scolded him for daydreaming during class.

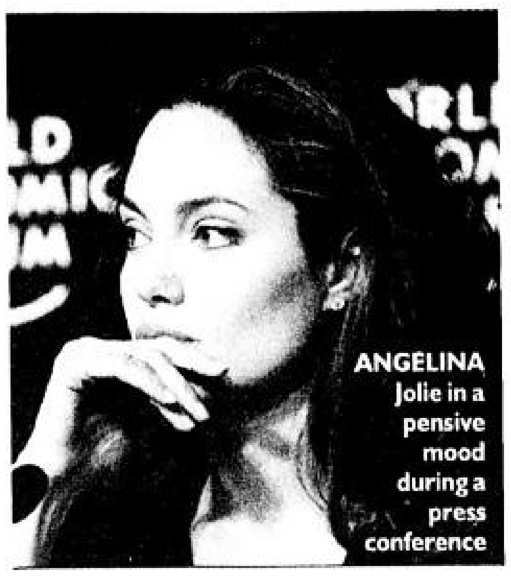
"I was thinking—what was I daydreaming about?" he said. "I can answer that tonight for you: I was thinking about this moment. I was trying to think: What could I contribute to this amazing world that we live in, how could I be of some service? Tonight is such an amazing dream come true."

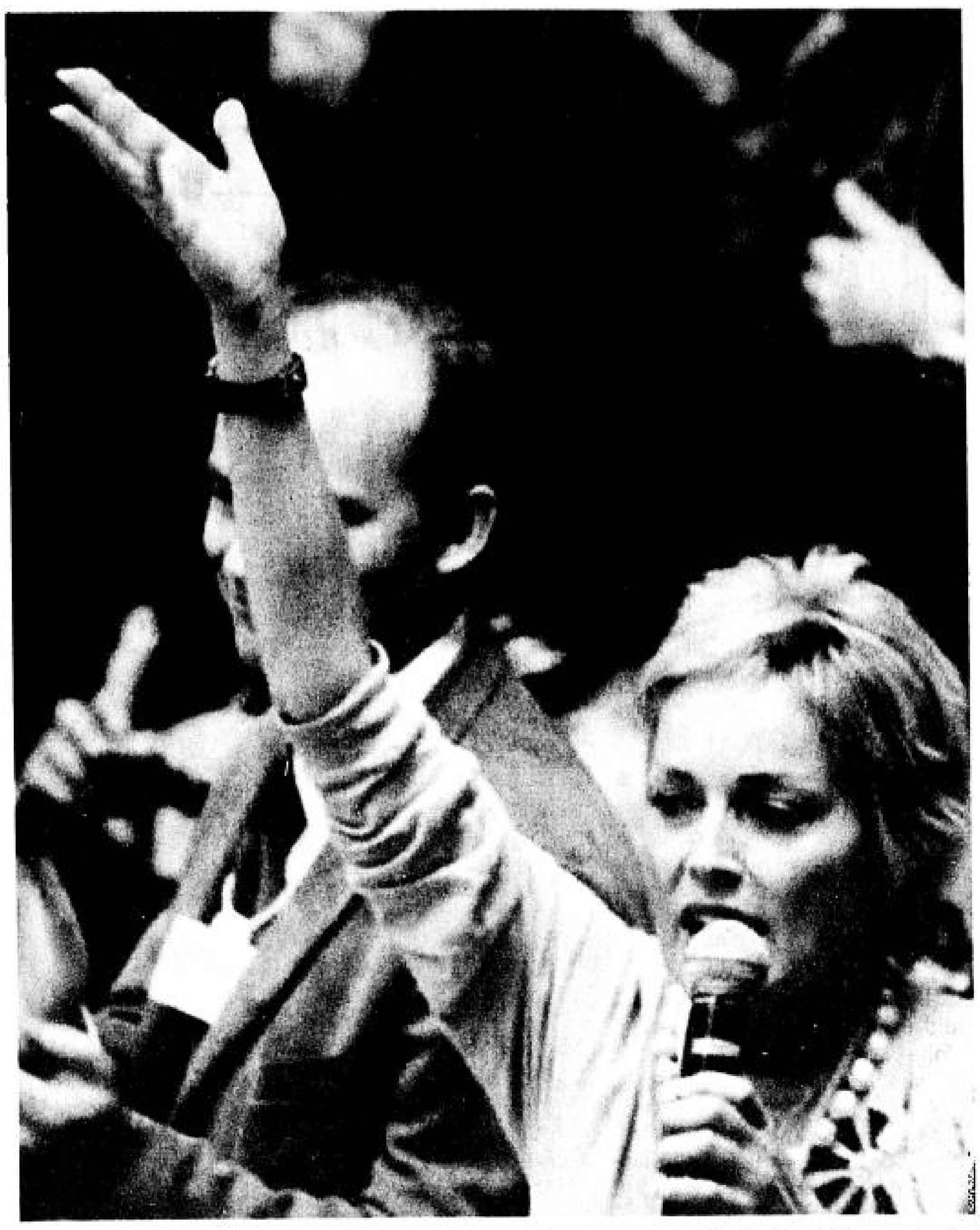
Richie said he realized the great power of music to unite people when he attended a Unesco dinner in Germany. There he found Israelis and Palestinians, academics and government officials gathered simply because they recognized that despite their differences they all liked his music.

He expressed his delight to find out "how far we have come now [at the World Economic Forum] to have politicians, governments, artists, businesses, corporations all saying one thing: We will make the commitment to improve the state of the world. I applaud you."

> Richie: 'What can I contribute to this amazing world that we live in? How can I be of some service?'


LIONEL Richie during a discussion on the responsibility of artists


ANGELINA Jolie in a pensive mood during a press conference



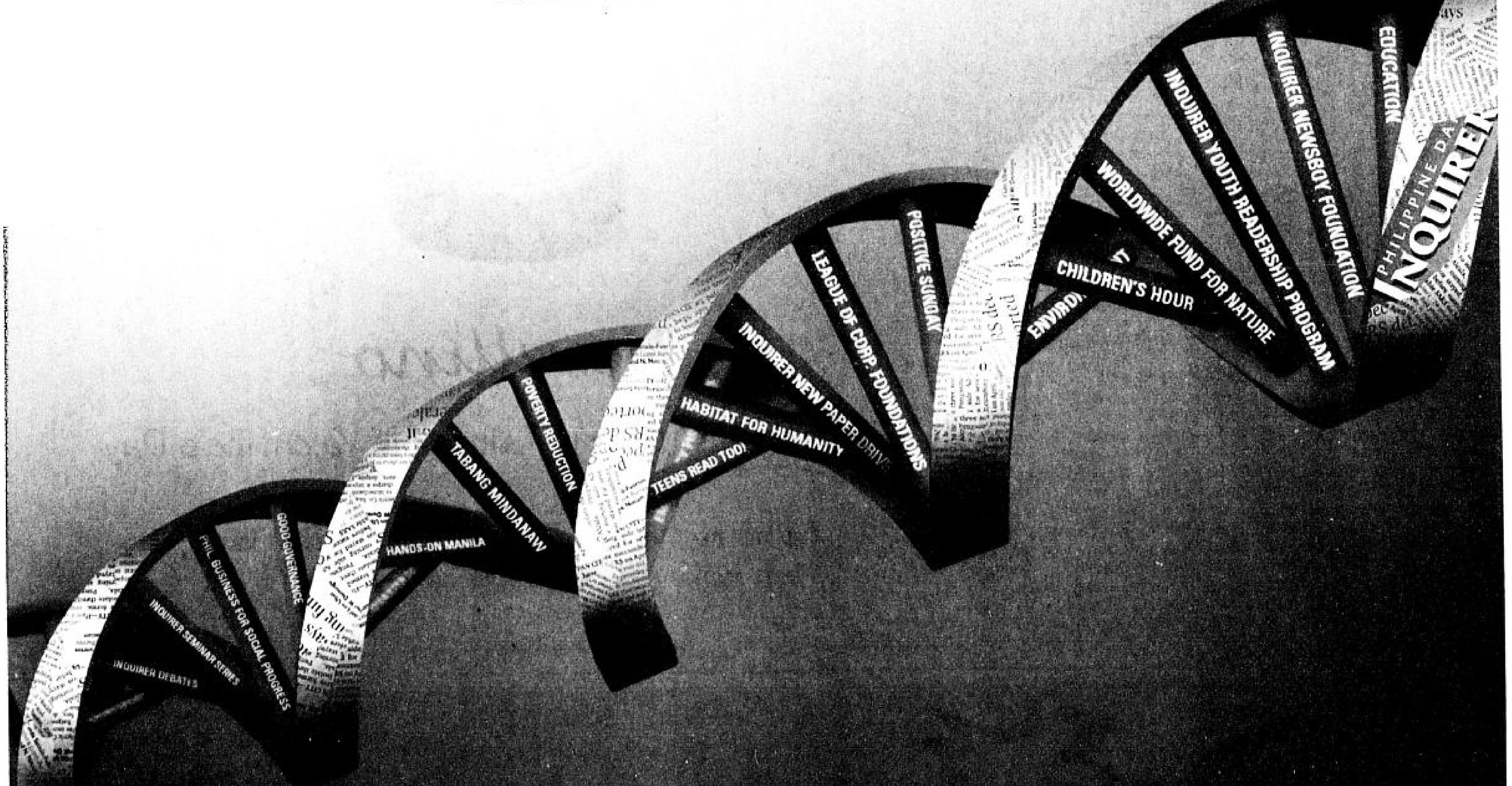
SHARON Stone (above) asks other participants to follow her example and pledge donations for the antimalaria campaign; and (at left) in serious exchange with a fellow advocate

Crucial role

Jolie was also praised by the participants in the World Economic Forum for her humanitarian work with the United Nations' refugee agency. Recently, Jolie, the star of "Girl, Interrupted" and "Lara Croft: Tomb Raider," said the interruption in her work at the movies has made it harder for her to go back to show business.

She said that keeping near the spotlight was crucial to getting continued assistance for people being helped by the United Nations

THE DAVOS STAR/ A2-3



Take a look at what sets us apart.

Part of what forms our identity as the leading broadsheet in the country is our innate desire to do more than just report the news. We also do something about it.

Our inherent traits include spearheading and supporting various programs that promote environmental awareness and protection, youth readership and development, and poverty alleviation. This is how we help give these causes the attention and assistance they deserve,

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

The Davos Star

From page A2-2

High Commissioner for Refugees. Jolie, who has spent four years as goodwill ambassador for the UN agency, has gone on missions to 20 countries, including Cambodia, Ecuador, the Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Sudan and Thailand.

Stone, leading health care advocate and chair of the Campaign for AIDS Research, was named recipient of the Global Conference Institute's Health Care Humanitarian Award for 2002. She was cited for her commitment and devotion to AIDS research, her leadership in the battle against AIDS, particularly in the area of research and education, fund-raising, education and awareness and her "monumental contribution" to world health care and humanitarianism.

Stone has also made a mark as a human rights advocate.

This reporter briefly talked to Stone when she was leaving a dinner for media people at one of posh hotels in Davos. I told her that she had many fans in the Philippines, and she was obviously pleased by my remark.

The second time I saw her was at a cocktail-karaoke party for media leaders. She was wearing a pair of light blue jeans and a lacy white blouse. She appeared to be not more than 5 feet 6 inches high.

Bono, lead singer of the Irish rock band U2, did not cause as much of a stir as Stone or Jolie did, but he contributed his bit to the discussion on aid to poor nations. Bono was on the same panel as British Prime Minister Tony Blair, former US President Bill Clinton, President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, all celebrities of the political world, and the founder and chair of Microsoft, Bill Gates.

"It is touching to be told that we have a heart for these matters [like aid to Africa] but sometimes it is better to have a hard head," said Bono. "The Marshall Plan that came out for Europe [after World War II] was not just from the goodness of the [United States'] heart but was meant as a bulwark against Sovietism. We are saying a Marshall-type plan for Africa could be against the tyranny of our time, on the front line of terrorism."

"With 3,000 Africans dying each day from mosquito bites [malaria], it is not a cause; it is an emergency," said Bono.

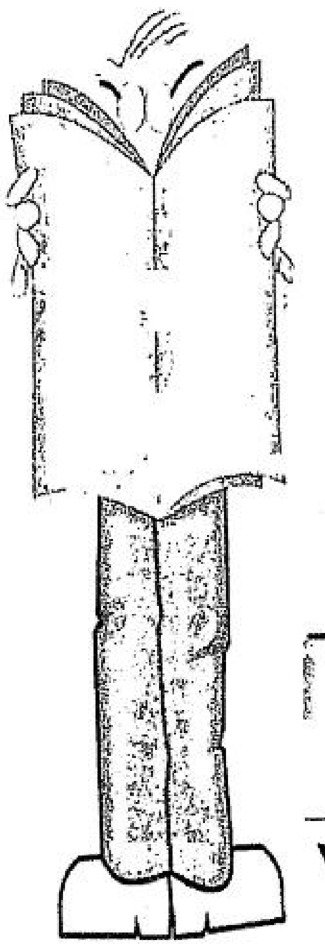
Biggest crowds

Bono—full name, Paul Hewson—has lent his name to many projects and causes and has gained an image as an activist. He has rallied many actors, artists and activists to his causes,

THE DAVOS STAR/ A2-6

U2 SINGER Bono: At left, listening to President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria at a plenary session on Africa, and flashing the V for victory sign when he meets with German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder.

Bono: 'With 3,000 Africans dying each day from mosquito bites [malaria], it is not [just] a cause; it is an emergency'



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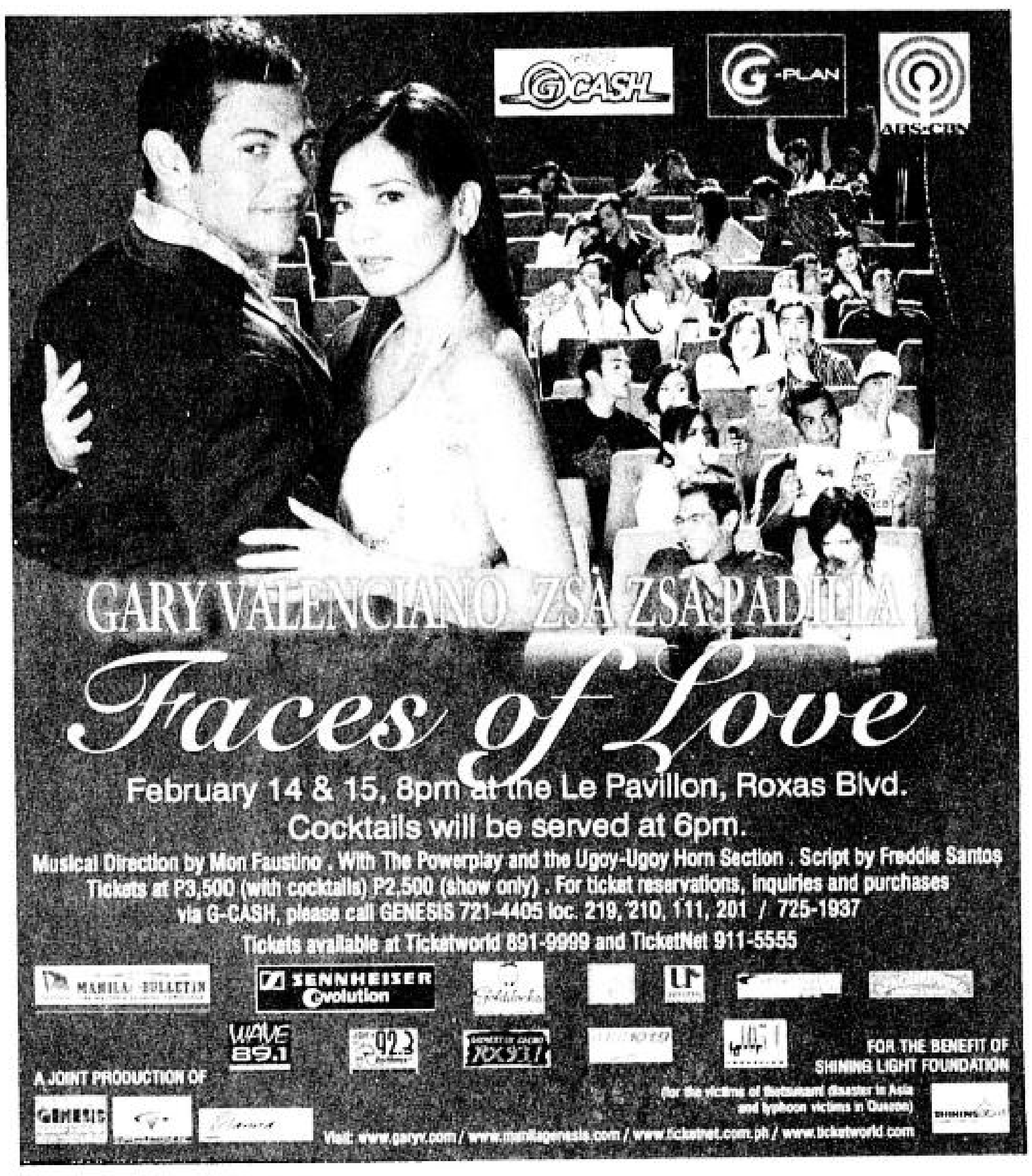

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
TV GUIDE
Wednesday, February 9, 2005

WEDNESDAY and THURSDAY 10 pm after Big News
Watch it with America!
ABC iba tayo
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Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABS-CBN 2				Showbiz No. 1	Sandara's Romance	Masked Rider Ryuki		Gatekeepers	TV Patrol		Spots	Krystala	Til Death Do Us Part	Hiram	Save The Last Dance	Yes Yes Show			Insider
NBN	Value Vision	Value Vision		Value Vision	Teledyaryo	Value Vision		Talk Ko 'To		Linya		Teledyaryo		Sinulog Festival				Paco Park Presents	
ABC 5			Problema Nyo, Sagot Ko	PBA Game-Bol	PBA		PBA		Sentro	PBA					Big News	American Idol		Look Who's Talking	
GMA 7		Saang Sulok Ng Langit	Joyride	Glass Shoes	One Piece	Knock Out	Slam Dunk	24 Oras		Extra Challenge		Mulawin		Starstruck	Stairway To Heaven	Nuts Entertainment			Sakal
RPN 9	Metro TV Shopping			Hey Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberries	Sponge Bob	Entertainment Tonight	Scrubs	Everwood		Ally McBeal		For Love Or Money 1		Newswatch Now	Corge For Truth		
IBC 13		Lifestyle		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Lifestyle		On Air Tambayan		Direk	Junior Reyes Report	Bestfriends	Celebrity Single	Entrepinoy	IBC News Tonite	Breaking Barriers	
Solar		Wwe Heat		WWE Confidential		Fantastic Four	Static Shock	Godzilla	Incredible Hulk	Stargate SG1		Wwe Raw				Wwe Heat		WWE Confidential	
Nickelodeon	Dora, The Explorer	Little Bear	Blues Clues	SpongeBob SquarePants	All That	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd	The Amanda Show	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	Nick Mix		100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd				Rugrats
MYX		Urban MYX		Pop MYX	OPM MYX	Take 5	My MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Mellow MYX	Rock MYX	Pop MYX	Urban MYX	MYX Live!		My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX
ETC		Knock First	JKX	The Today Show		Starting Over		NBC Nightly News	Entertainment Tonight	Will & Grace	Good Morning Miami	Who Wants To Marry My Dad		Last Comic Standing		Tonight Show With Jay Leno		Ellimidate	Change of Heart
Cinema One		Tapang Sa Tapang				Mano Po 2		Tunay Na Tunay (Gets Mo, Gets Ko)			Persona	Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon (9:15 PM)				Magkasangga Sa Batas			
Studio 23								Batman Beyond	Project Arms	Wazzup Wazzup	Mr. Bean	C.S.I.	Angel	Las Vegas Vacation		News Central	The Oprah Winfrey Show		Yes Dear
AXN		Maximum Exposure		Maximum Exposure		Maximum Exposure		Maximum Exposure		Beastmaster III		The Amazing Race 6				Spider-Man			
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		American Idol		Ally McBeal		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	American Idol		Oprah Winfrey Show		Third Watch		Friends	American Idol
CNN				Business International		Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	Business International		World News Asia		World News	World News	World News Asia		World News	World Sport
National Geographic		Passport	Voices Of Doo Wop	Taboo		Chasing Time	Running For Freedom	The Snake Wranglers	Croc Chronicles Dr Brady Barr	Built For The Kill		Myths Of The Fist		Top 5		Megastructures		Secret China	
Solar Sports		Copenhagen Masters MD Final			FIVB World Grand Prix Italy vs. Brazil				ATP Heineken Open '05 SemiFinals2				NBA TV Daily	NBA Game Utah @ Denver					NBA Inside Stuff
Lifestyle Network	Country Style	Interiors By Design	Decorating With Style	Decorating Cents	Molto Mario	Sweet Dreams	30 Minute Meals	Bill Boggs Corner	Unwrapped	Wolfgang Puck's	E! Entertainment Special Hollywood How To Date A Superstar		You're Invited	Lifestyle		Style Star	Nigella Bites	Breathing Room	Genuine Article
HBO			Punch-Drunk Love (3:45 PM)				Reckless Kelly (5:20 PM)		Hulk (6:45 PM)					Maid In Manhattan			Striking Distance		
Star Movies		Creature (3:15 PM)				Sleepless In Seattle				The Recruit (7:05 PM)				Die Another Day				Liberty Stands Still (11:15PM)	
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Sylvester & Tweety Mysteries	Police Academy	He-Man & The Masters Of The Universe	Teen Titans	Yu-Gi-Oh!	Gundam Seed	The Looney Tunes Show		The Powerpuff Girls	Codename Kids Next Door	Mr. T	Josie And The Pussycats	Boomerang - Boomeraction	Yu-Gi-Oh!
ESPN		Motorsport Asia	Big East Conf.: Pittsburgh vs West Virginia				Big East Conf.: Notre Dame vs. Syracuse				Goals!	Sportscenter Taiwan	2004 Skins Billiards C'ship NJ USA		2004 Taiwan World Pool C'ship Taiwan				Sportscenter Asia
Disney Channel	Mr Bean The Animated Series	Totally Spies	The Sleepover Club	Art Attack/Untalkative Bunny	That's So Raven	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr Bean The Animated Series	Lilo & Stitch/Untalkative Bunny	George Of The Jungle 2			My Wife And Kids	That's So Raven	According To Jim	America's Funniest Home Video	The Adventures Of The Great Mouse Detective	
Cinemax	The Parole Officer (2:45 PM)				No Mercy				Combustion			Trucks			American Pie The Wedding				The Godfather
Hallmark Channel	Mad About You	King Solomon's Mines - Part 2				Play With Me Sesame	Sesame Street		Bewitched	Judging Amy		Hustle - 2		Dog Gone Love			Strong Medicine (10:35PM)		Judging Amy (11:25PM)
Discovery Channel		Science Mysteries		Science Frontiers		Wild Science		Ultimate Discovery		140 The Year China Discovered America				Wild Science		Ultimate Discovery		Hour Asia	
MTV Philippines		2005 MTV VJ Hunt Special 1		Non-Stop Hits		Non-Stop Hits		MTV Get Spotted	MTV Loveline	2005 MTV Asia Awards		MTV Rockd!	Whatever Things	TRL		Room Raiders	One Bad Trip	VH1 Video Collections	
Sports Plus				Porsche md 9&10	Italian Serie A				You've Got to See This						Bikini Destination	WTA L.A. C'ships Kuznetsova vs. Sharapova			Porsche md 9&10
EWTN	Council Of Faith	Angelus (3:15 PM)	Refurbishing The Soul	The Donut Man	Faith Factory	The Holy Rosary With Mother Angelica and the Nuns Of Our Lady Of Angels Monastery	Saints For The Third Millenium	The Virtues	EWTN Gallery	Mother Angelica Live Classics		One In Their Hearts	Pope Pius XII	Daily Mass		Angelus (10:15PM)	St. Catherine Of Siena	Our Father's Plan	

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FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
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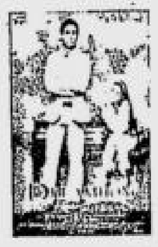
ALFIE
Subject to MTRCB RATING

THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
Subject to MTRCB RATING


DREAMBOY
Subject to MTRCB RATING

LET THE LOVE BEGIN
Subject to MTRCB RATING

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1 A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT
2 ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13
3 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
4 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
5 ALFIE
6 ELEKTRA
7 LITTLE BLACK BOOK smcinemaexclusive
8 MEET THE FOCKERS
9 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
10 DREAMBOY
11 SHALL WE DANCE
12 SALSA smcinemaexclusive

sm city fairview
1 SHALL WE DANCE
2 ELEKTRA
3 MEET THE FOCKERS
4 ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13
5 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
6 DREAMBOY
7 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
8 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
9 WITHOUT THE PADDLE
10 A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT
11 KUNG FU HUSTLE
12 MAD HOUSE

sm city north edsa
1 ELEKTRA
2 DREAMBOY
3 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
4 SHALL WE DANCE
5 MEET THE FOCKERS
6 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
7 ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13
8 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

sm city manila
1 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
2 ELEKTRA
3 ALFIE
4 MEET THE FOCKERS
5 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
6 ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13
7 SHALL WE DANCE
8 RACING STRIPES
9 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
10 KUNG FU HUSTLE
11 DREAMBOY
12 A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT

sm city sta. mesa
1 DREAMBOY
2 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
3 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
4 SHALL WE DANCE
5 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
6 MEET THE FOCKERS
7 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
8 ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13
9 DREAMBOY
10 ELEKTRA

sm city southmall
1 WITHOUT THE PADDLE
2 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
3 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
4 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
5 MEET THE FOCKERS
6 SHALL WE DANCE
7 DREAMBOY
8 ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13
9 ELEKTRA
10 A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT

sm city bicutan
1 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
2 DREAMBOY
3 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
4 ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13

sm cinema tutuban
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

sm supercenter sucat
1 ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13
2 DREAMBOY
3 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
4 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX

LUZON

sm city pampanga
1 DREAMBOY
2 ELEKTRA
3 MEET THE FOCKERS
4 A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT
5 MAD HOUSE
6 LET THE LOVE BEGIN

sm city baguio
1 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
2 ELEKTRA
3 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
4 DREAMBOY

sm city batangas
1 KUNG FU HUSTLE
2 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
3 SHALL WE DANCE
4 IT'S ALL ABOUT LOVE

sm city dasmariñas
1 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
2 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
3 DREAMBOY
4 MEET THE FOCKERS

sm city marilao
1 DREAMBOY
2 MEET THE FOCKERS LET
3 THE LOVE BEGIN
4 KUNG FU HUSTLE

sm city bacoor
1 ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13
2 ELEKTRA
3 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
4 SHALL WE DANCE
5 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
6 DREAMBOY
7 WITHOUT A PADDLE
8 MEET THE FOCKERS

sm city lucena
1 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
2 KUNG FU HUSTLE
3 DREAMBOY
4 ELEKTRA

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

sm city cebu
1 ELEKTRA
2 DREAMBOY
3 MEET THE FOCKERS
4 A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT
5 MAD HOUSE
6 SALSA smcinemaexclusive
7 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
8 KUNG FU HUSTLE

sm city iloilo
1 IT'S ALL ABOUT LOVE
2 RESERVED
3 ELEKTRA
4 KUNG FU HUSTLE
5 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
6 DREAMBOY
7 RESERVED
8 RAISE YOUR VOICE

sm city davao
1 ELEKTRA
2 KUNG FU HUSTLE
3 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
4 DREAMBOY
5 HELLWOLF
6 MEET THE FOCKERS

sm city cagayan de oro
1 MEET THE FOCKERS
2 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
3 DREAMBOY
4 KUNG FU HUSTLE

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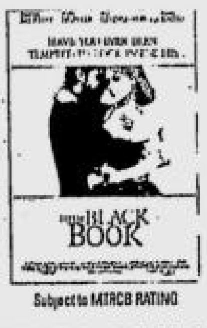
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LITTLE BLACK BOOK
TODAY
SM MEGAMALL

Affirmative Allen vs Cruel Cowell

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

YES, "FAME" is a smaller and less popular TV talent search than "American Idol," but it is much more positive and helpful in the way that it discovers and develops tomorrow's singing stars.

"American Idol's" resident bitchy witch, **Simon Cowell**, says he comes down hard on the show's auditionees because he wants to set a high standard for the talent search. But "Fame's" **Debbie Allen** is able to set even higher performance standards without traumatizing young talents with excruciatingly cutting insults.

In fact, Allen *loves* her talents into excellence, and "Fame's" semi-finalists respond in kind, with performances that are full of hope, love and passion. For proof positive, catch "Fame" on Star World every Friday night.

This is not to say that Allen is too soft on the talents she's developing. She can be quite a demanding taskmaster in her own right, but the big difference between her and Cruel Cowell is her constantly positive and affirmative view of the entire star-building process.

She feels so passionately about what her show's semi-finalists have to offer that she even argues with the program's celebrity judges whenever their comments are too negative. "Be nice to my kids!" she warns them.

And, when they *don't* choose a contestant to go into the finals, she makes sure that they promise to help the young talent go places in show biz in other ways, since they're so well-connected.

Contrastingly, on "American Idol," Cowell's cruel statements have gotten so out of hand that even his fellow judges, **Paula Abdul** and **Randy Jackson**, have occasionally made it clear that they've had it up to *here* with him.

On a recent telecast, they even walked out on him when he sadistically put a pair of twins through the wringer. Subsequently, Abdul shouted at Cowell, telling him to shut up in no uncertain terms!

Now, we know that this sort of feuding and fighting can be ordered by a show's producers to spice up the proceedings. But Cowell has really been too bitchy of late, so it's no surprise that many people are ticked off by him.

SIMON COWELL. Too bitchy

HALLE BERRY, "Catwoman"

Come to think of it, you really can't blame the guy. If you have only bitchiness going for you, what more can you do to keep viewers interested, except up the ante on the hopefully quotable vitriol that you spew out?

But we trust that, with her much more positive example, Debbie Allen can wean viewers away from their Cowell-induced fixation on cruelty, and that perceptively supportive talent development will become the order of the day on TV talent searches.

We hope, too, that Cowell's local clones will also be rendered passe and de classe on our own talent searches. Some of them just don't have what it takes to be originally bitchy, and their copycat cruelty is too cynically derivative to be endured.

AFFIRMATIVE/ A2-5

THE WHOLE COUNTRY AWAITS FOR THE ULTIMATE LOVE MOVIE OF THE YEAR!

A must see movie ngayong Valentine's!
– Aga Muhlach

Sigurado ako, it's gonna be a big hit!
– John Lloyd Cruz

Si Papa Piolo ang ultimate DREAMBOY!
– Al-Al delas Alas

Sa lahat ng mga may DREAMBOY, may boyfriend o wala, manood po tayo!
– Direk Joyce Bernal

Para sa akin, si Bea ang ultimate dreamgirl.
– Joross Gamboa

Super excited na akong panoorin ang Dreamboy!
-Sandara Park

Lahat tayo, let's make the effort to fall in love by watching DREAMBOY!
- Kris Aquino

Kung Dreamboy si Piolo, Dreamgirl ko naman si Bea!
- Vhong Navarro

Gusto n'yo bang manood ng pelikula para ma-in love? Manood ng DREAMBOY!
– Roderick Paulate

For this Valentine's day, there is only one movie you should see. Dreamboy!
– Bernard Palanca

Mga DREAMBOYS na katulad ko, let's do it! It's a date!
– Bayani Agbayani

Siguradong napakaganda at kikiligin kayo!
– Jericho Rosales

Piolo Pascual
Bea Alonzo
DREAMBOY

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"Emotionally compelling, visually stunning, superbly acted."
-Harper Barnes, ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

"Spiked with nerve-jangling energy."
-Robert Denerstein, ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS

"'AP13' is a gritty, fast-paced action film!"
-Jack Garner, ROCHESTER DEMOCRAT

"Ethan's best action flick since 'Training Day.' It's Laurence's best role by far since the original 'Matrix'" -Tom Long, THE DETROIT NEWS

'Matrix' Laurence Fishburne is brilliantly ruthless." -MAXIM MAGAZINE

Affirmative Allen . . .

From page A2-4

'The House of Flying Daggers'

ZHANG Ziyi's acclaimed starrer, "The House of Flying Daggers," is now on DVD and VCD. The film is set in 859 AD, when the Tang Dynasty is locked in battle with rebel armies. The most prestigious of these is the House of Flying Daggers, which is becoming even more powerful under a mysterious new leader.

Two local captains, Leo (Andy Low) and Jin (Takeshi Kaneshiro) are ordered to capture the new leader and they hatch an elaborate plan: Jin will pretend to be a lone warrior called Wind and rescue the beautiful blind revolutionary Mei (Ziyi) from prison, earning her trust and escorting her to the House's secret headquarters.

The plan works, but Jin and Mei fall deeply in love. Danger lurks in the forest surrounding them. What lies ahead for the star-crossed lovers?

'Jazz' in love

LOVE is in the air as Candid Records Philippines, The Podium Mall, the British Council and **Remy Martin** present "Jazz in Love" at the Podium's Chill Area on Feb. 11, 18 and 25.

On Feb. 11, **Isha**, a singer-songwriter pianist, performs with **Jayvee Torres** on drums and **Simon Tan** on bass. They will do jazzed-up rendition of '80s hits including "Head Over Heels" "Everybody Wants to Rule the World," from Isha's "Time & Again" album. Young balladeer **Enrique Marcos** will also sing his carrier single, "I Honestly Love You."

'Catwoman'

HALLE Berry plays Patience Phillips in "Catwoman," now available on DVD and VCD formats. Buyers of the video will find a raffle coupon which gives 15 of them a chance to win P2,000 worth of Ystilo Salon gift certificates, or P2,000 worth of hair care products. Deadline for dropping of entries is Feb. 28.

DEBBIE ALLEN

See'eMall!

AYALA CINEMAS

THX

Movies/schedules may change without prior notice. For verification call 729-7777

ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU
THX 1 THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA	1 LET THE LOVE BEGIN	1 LET THE LOVE BEGIN	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 1 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX	1 DREAMBOY
2 LET THE LOVE BEGIN	2 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX	2 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 2 THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA	2 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
3 DREAMBOY	3 ELEKTRA	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 3 THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT	3 A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT
4 SHALL WE DANCE	4 DREAMBOY	4 MEET THE FOCKERS	GUARANTEED SEATS 4 SHALL WE DANCE	4 MADHOUSE
5 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX		5 SHALL WE DANCE	GUARANTEED SEATS 5 DREAMBOY	5
		6 DREAMBOY		
		7 ALFIE		

GB1 GREENBELT 1
1 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
2 DREAMBOY

At the Activity Center

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER	AYALA CENTER CEBU
Valentine Show Featuring Side A February 13, 2005	Valentines' Serenade at Food Establishments February 12-14.2005	A Book Bug's A Bunch of Treat for Heart February 11, 2005

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GREENBELT 3 PARK	GREENBELT 3 LOBBY
Valentine Show featuring Bituin Escalante February 12. 2004	Vera Wang Gown Exhibit February 17-28, 2005

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Stargazing
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Reserved seats for the first 100 Let the Love Begin movie ticketholders

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The PHANTOM of the OPERA
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4 ALFIE
5 DREAMBOY
6 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
7 ELEKTRA
8 ASSAULT ON PRECINT 13
9 MEET THE FOCKERS
10 WITHOUT A PADDLE

ERMITA 538-7809 to 12

1 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
2 ASSAULT ON PRECINT 13
3 SHALL WE DANCE
4 ALFIE
5 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
6 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
7 DREAMBOY

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3 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
4 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
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7 MEET THE FOCKERS
8 SHALL WE DANCE

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3 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
4 DREAMBOY

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3 ASSAULT ON PRECINT 13
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3 A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT
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3 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
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Affirmative Allen . . .

From page A2-4

'The House of Flying Daggers'

ZHANG Ziyi's acclaimed starrer, "The House of Flying Daggers," is now on DVD and VCD. The film is set in 859 AD, when the Tang Dynasty is locked in battle with rebel armies. The most prestigious of these is the House of Flying Daggers, which is becoming even more powerful under a mysterious new leader.

Two local captains, Leo (Andy Low) and Jin (Takeshi Kaneshiro) are ordered to capture the new leader and they hatch an elaborate plan: Jin will pretend to be a lone warrior called Wind and rescue the beautiful blind revolutionary Mei (Ziyi) from prison, earning her trust and escorting her to the House's secret headquarters.

The plan works, but Jin and Mei fall deeply in love. Danger lurks in the forest surrounding them. What lies ahead for the star-crossed lovers?

'Jazz' in love

LOVE is in the air as Candid Records Philippines, The Podium Mall, the British Council and **Remy Martin** present "Jazz in Love" at the Podium's Chill Area on Feb. 11, 18 and 25.

On Feb. 11, **Isha**, a singer-songwriter pianist, performs with **Jayvee Torres** on drums and **Simon Tan** on bass. They will do jazzed-up rendition of '80s hits including "Head Over Heels" "Everybody Wants to Rule the World," from Isha's "Time & Again" album. Young balladeer **Enrique Marcos** will also sing his carrier single, "I Honestly Love You."

'Catwoman'

HALLE Berry plays Patience Phillips in "Catwoman," now available on DVD and VCD formats. Buyers of the video will find a raffle coupon which gives 15 of them a chance to win P2,000 worth of Ystilo Salon gift certificates, or P2,000 worth of hair care products. Deadline for dropping of entries is Feb. 28.

DEBBIE ALLEN

SeeeMall!

AYALA CINEMAS

THX

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ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU
THX 1 THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA	1 LET THE LOVE BEGIN	1 LET THE LOVE BEGIN	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 1 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX	1 DREAMBOY
2 LET THE LOVE BEGIN	2 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX	2 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 2 THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA	2 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
3 DREAMBOY	3 ELEKTRA	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 3 THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT	3 A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT
4 SHALL WE DANCE	4 DREAMBOY	4 MEET THE FOCKERS	GUARANTEED SEATS 4 SHALL WE DANCE	4 MADHOUSE
5 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX		5 SHALL WE DANCE	GUARANTEED SEATS 5 DREAMBOY	5
		6 DREAMBOY		
		7 ALFIE		

GB1 GREENBELT 1
1 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
2 DREAMBOY

At the Activity Center

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER	AYALA CENTER CEBU
Valentine Show Featuring Side A February 13, 2005	Valentines' Serenade at Food Establishments February 12-14 2005	A Book Bug's A Bunch of Treat for Heart February 11, 2005

ENTERTAINMENT LIVE!

GREENBELT 3 PARK	GREENBELT 3 LOBBY
Valentine Show featuring Bituin Escalante February 12 2004	Vera Wang Gown Exhibit February 17-28, 2005

Onstage

REPERTORY PHILIPPINES presents Busybody
at REP's GLOBE THEATER - Feb. 11,12,13,18,19,20,25,26,27

Ayala MUSEUM

Visit the New Ayala Museum located beside Greenbelt 4 along Makati Avenue.
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The Davos Star

From page A2-3

which included, most recently, his campaign to cancel Third World debt as spokesperson for the Jubilee 2000 projects and Netaid.

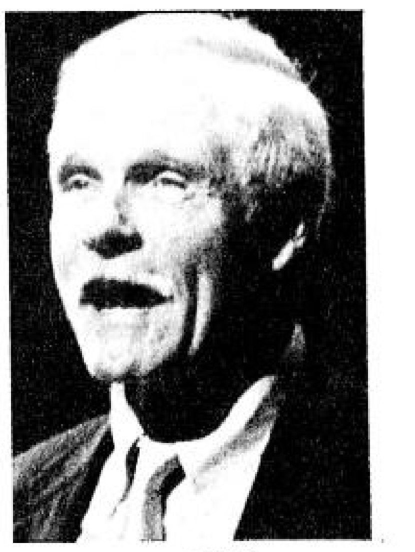
This year's annual meeting of the WEF was attended by more than 500 chairmen and CEOs from the world's leading companies, such as Coca-Cola, Nestlé, Siemens, Volkswagen, Goldman and Sachs, Merck and Microsoft.

Also in attendance were 200 public figures, including 23 heads of state, 72 cabinet members, 35 ambassadors, 24 heads or senior officials of international organizations. Present, too, were 300 media and opinion leaders, 55 heads of nongovernment organizations, 26 religious leaders of different faiths, 172 academics and 15 union leaders.

But, as in many countries, the show biz celebrities drew the biggest crowds. A late nightcap—cocktails and interaction with the show biz stars—was completely signed up days before the event, and the organizers had to transfer it to a bigger venue to accommodate the crowd.

This reporter was unable to wangle a seat at this glittering gathering of stars. But he was lucky to get an invitation to a dinner with show biz and media celebrities. Among the media stars at the dinner were Ted Turner of CNN and one of the founders of Google, Larry Page. Google is now widely recognized as the world's largest search engine and has humorously been referred to by many computer nerds as "God" or "the Universe."

There was a universe of ideas, topics, and concerns discussed during the WEF, and the celebrities definitely used star power to shed light on the issues. One session asked the question: "Can Artists Still Change the World?" If this media participant and observer were to answer the question, I would say, yes. With their celebrity and persuasive powers, artists have the potential to change the world. That was demonstrated at Davos.



TED TURNER of CNN at a party for the media

SHOW STOPPER

'Vera Drake' is British Best Film

LONDON — "Vera Drake," a gritty drama about a backyard abortionist in 1950s Britain, was named Best Film Sunday at the 32nd annual Evening Standard British Film Awards.

Veteran British actress Imelda Staunton's performance as Vera — the saintly housekeeper who performs illegal abortions on the side also earned her the Best Actress Award at Sunday's awards ceremony.

Accolades

The awards are the latest accolades for the Mike Leigh directed drama which has received three Oscar nominations and 11 nominations for the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) awards.

Paddy Considine won the Best Actor award for his performance in thriller "Dead Man's Shoes."

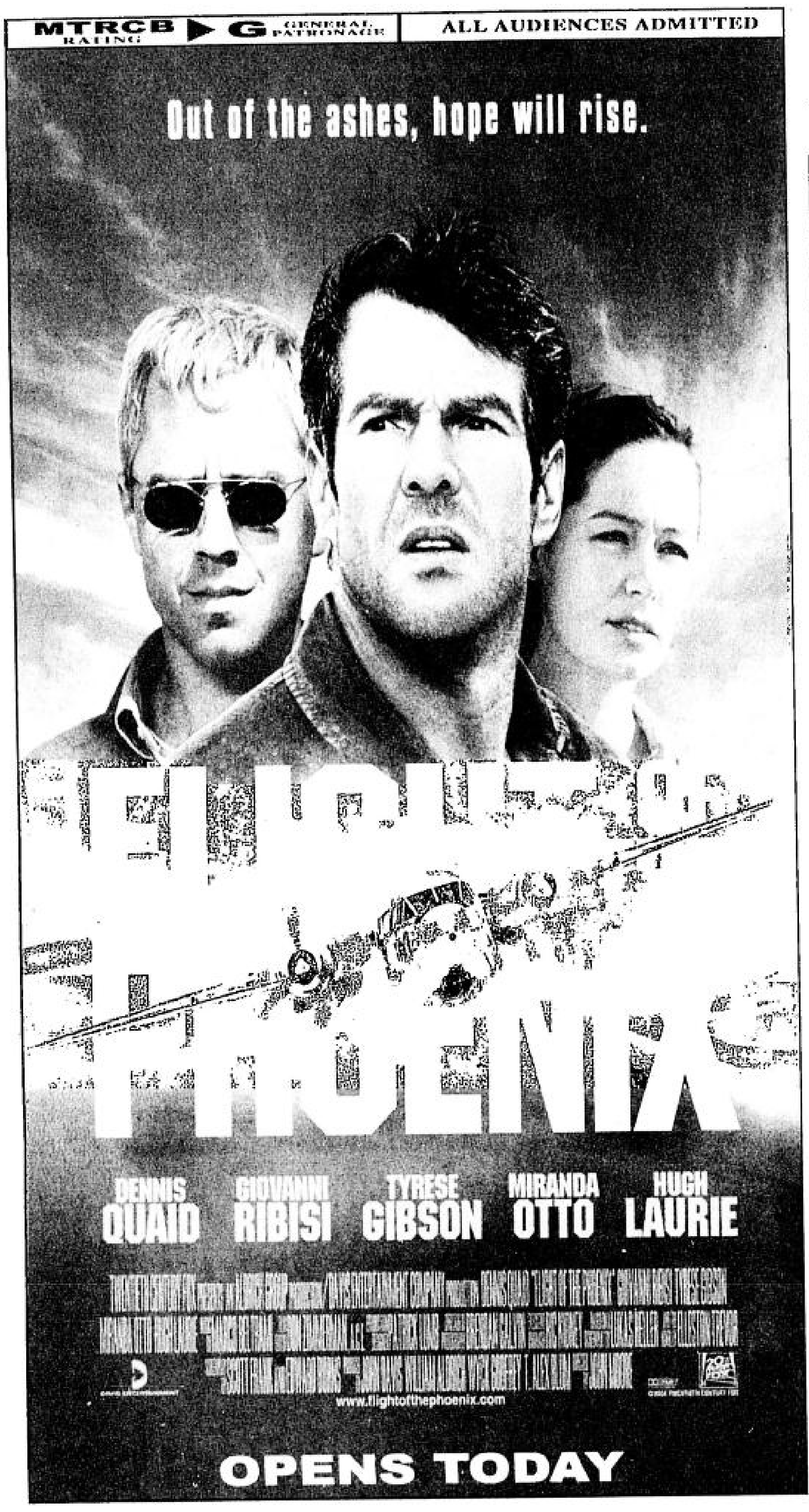
Simon Pegg, star and co-writer of the low-budget zombie comedy "Shaun of the Dead," won the Peter Sellers Award for Comedy.

Special award

Tim Bevan and Eric Fellner, the co-chair of Working Title Films — the production house responsible for romantic comedies "Notting Hill" and the "Bridget Jones" films, received a special award recognizing their contribution to British film.

Renee Zellweger's sequel "Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason" was voted The Evening Standard Reader's Film of 2004. *AP*

IMELDA Stauton in "Vera Drake"



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Out of the ashes, hope will rise.
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DENNIS QUAID GIOVANNI RIBISI TYRESE GIBSON MIRANDA OTTO HUGH LAURIE
www.flightofthephoenix.com
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You are invited to discover the secret...
"IF YOU LIKE HARRY POTTER YOU WILL LOVE THIS MOVIE!"
5 CHILDREN & IT
KENNETH BRANAGH
FREDDIE HIGHMORE
ZOE WANAMAKER
and EDDIE IZZARD as the voice of "IT"
Visual Effect/Animatronics: JIM HENSON'S CREATURE SHOP
Song by: SEAN LENNON Directed by: JOHN STEPHENSON
OPENS ON FEB. 16

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FROM THE DIRECTOR OF "AMELIE"
THE BRITISH ACADEMY FILM AWARDS NOMINEE FOR FILM NOT IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE
"Just sit back and behold as Jean-Pierre Jeunet takes you to hell and back in this epic love story." - Peter Travers, Rolling Stone
"An existential romance by war and mystery." - Manohla Dargis, The New York Times
"All you want to do is clap and weep and watch it all over again immedietely." - Ken Tucker, New York
AUDREY TAUTOU
A FILM BY JEAN-PIERRE JEUNET
A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT
From the heartache of war began a journey of hope.

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"JUDE LAW IS ALFIE. A MAGNIFICENT PERFORMANCE"
What's it all about?
JUDE LAW
Alfie
PARAMOUNT PICTURES PRESENTS A CHARLES SHYER PRODUCTION A CHARLES SHYER FILM JUDE LAW "ALFIE"
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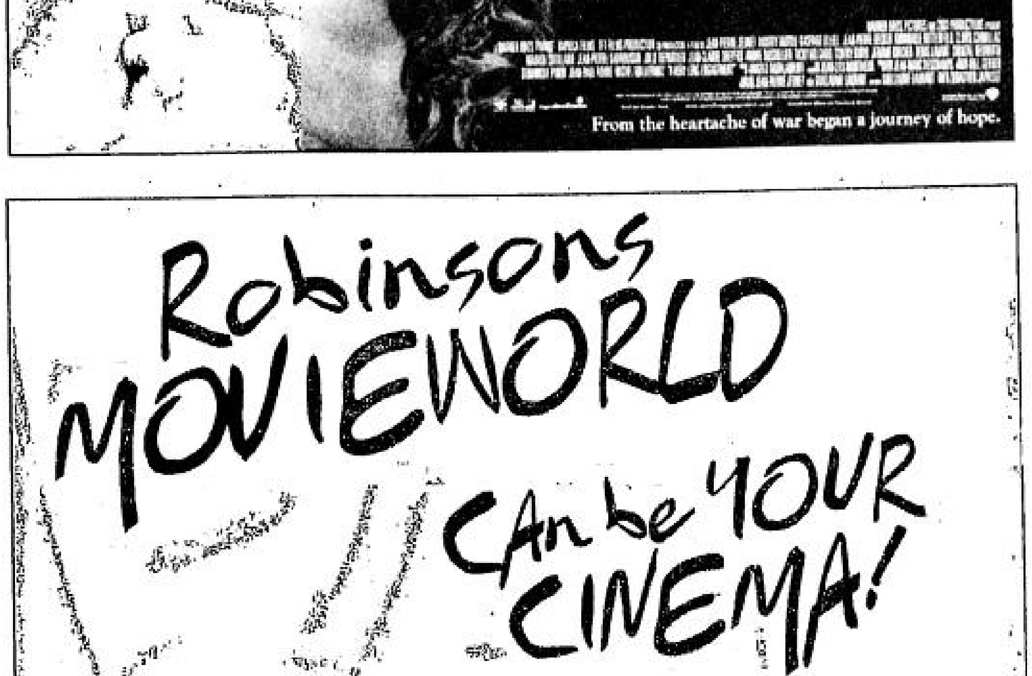

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Eminem shoots down Elvis comeback in UK

LONDON—US rapper Eminem has taken the number one spot with "Like Toy Soldiers," the Official UK Charts Company said on Sunday.

Eminem's number one track samples '80s pop song "Toy Soldiers" by Martika and is about the ongoing war of words in the US hip hop scene.

By becoming number one, Eminem has conquered the King of Rock N' Roll, Elvis Presley, whose re-released track "Are you Lonesome Tonight," made its entry at number two.

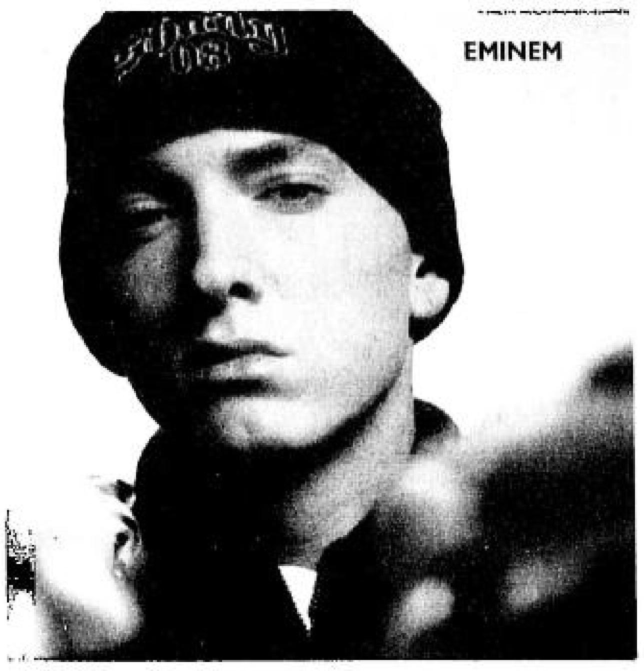
Nearly 28 years after his death, Presley's record company RCA is re-releasing 18 former number ones in time to cash in before the 50-year copyright protection on sound recordings in most European countries expires on his earlier hits.

A duet between teen idol Brian McFadden and former Neighbours star Delta Goodrem, "Almost Here," is at number three while Ashanti's "Only U" dropped to number four.

Guitar band Bloc Party, led by Kele Okereke who was recently featured on the NME cool list, have entered the charts at fifth position with "So Here We Are." In sixth spot was Ciara featuring Petey Pablo with "Goodies" while electronic artists Chemical Brothers held seventh spot with "Galvanize," a track taken from their new album "Push the Button."

One World Project's "Grief Never Grows Old" was in eighth spot after two weeks in the charts.

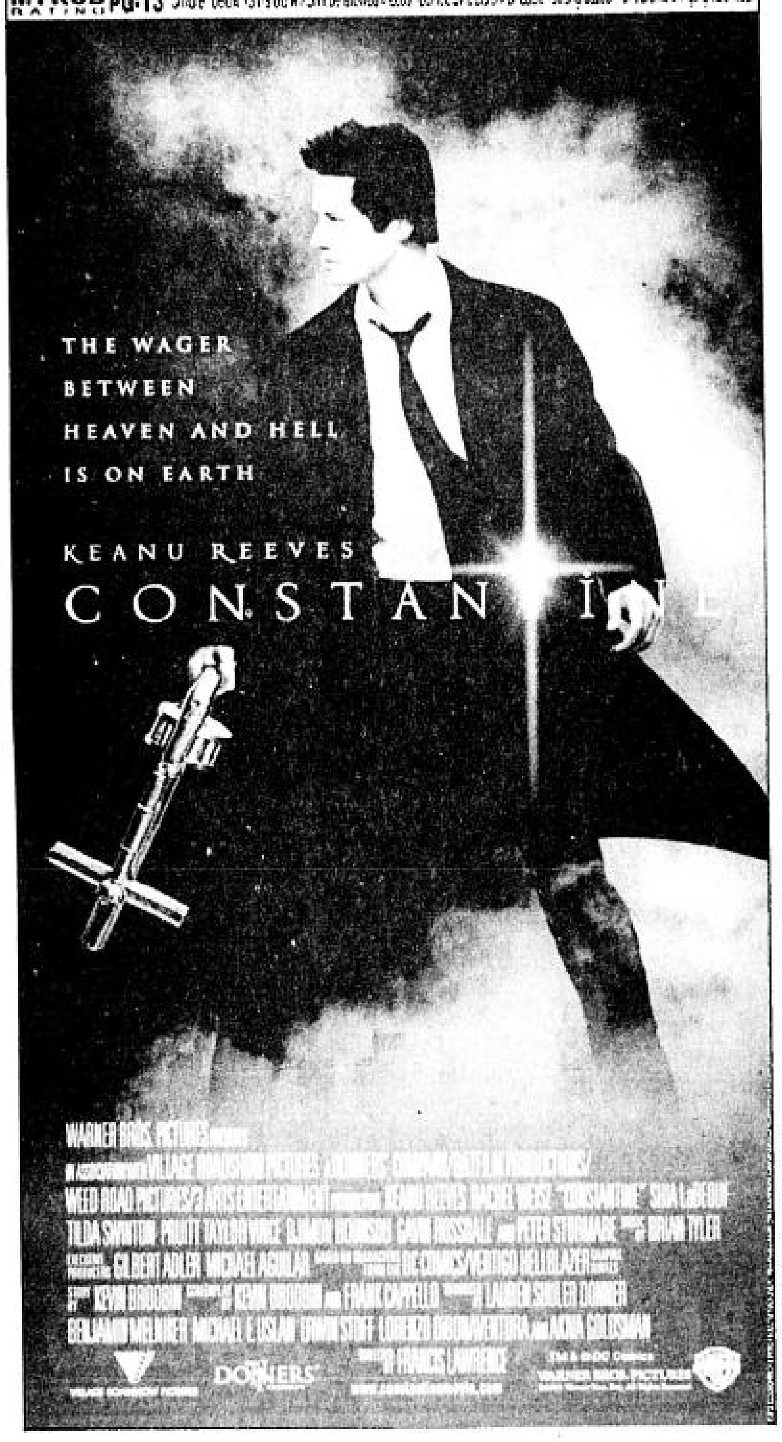
"I Just Wanna Live" by Good Charlotte debuted at number nine followed by Uniting Nations' "Out of Touch," which samples Hall & Oates' classic track, tumbled from third to 10th position on the charts. *Reuters*



EMINEM

CHIP OFF THE OLD BLOCK. Ziggy Marley, Bob Marley's son, performs songs written by his father during a concert on Sunday commemorating the reggae legend's 60th birthday in Meskel Square, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

OPENS FEBRUARY 16
MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult. Strong caution for parents bringing the kids.



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$85M SUPER PRODUCTION FROM WARNER BROS.
OPENS TODAY

All I Ask Of You

NO MORE TALK OF DARKNESS;
FORGET THESE WIDE-EYED FEARS.
I'M HERE, NOTHING CAN HARM YOU --
MY WORDS WILL WARM AND CALM YOU.

LET ME BE YOUR FREEDOM,
LET DAYLIGHT DRY YOUR TEARS.
I'M HERE, WITH YOU, BESIDE YOU,
TO GUARD YOU AND TO GUIDE YOU...

SAY YOU LOVE ME
EVERY WAKING MOMENT,
TURN MY HEAD WITH
TALK OF SUMMERTIME...

SAY YOU NEED ME WITH YOU,
NOW AND ALWAYS...
PROMISE ME THAT ALL YOU SAY IS TRUE --
THAT'S ALL I ASK OF YOU...

LET ME BE YOUR SHELTER,
LET ME BE YOUR LIGHT.
YOU'RE SAFE, NO-ONE WILL FIND YOU --
YOUR FEARS ARE FAR BEHIND YOU...

ALL I WANT IS FREEDOM,
A WORLD WITH NO MORE NIGHT...
AND YOU, ALWAYS BESIDE ME,
TO HOLD ME AND TO HIDE ME...

THEN SAY YOU'LL SHARE WITH ME
ONE LOVE, ONE LIFETIME...
LET ME LEAD YOU
FROM YOUR SOLITUDE...

SAY YOU NEED ME WITH YOU HERE,
BESIDE YOU...
ANYWHERE YOU GO, LET ME GO TOO --
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LOVE ME --
THAT'S ALL I ASK OF YOU...

ANYWHERE YOU GO
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LOVE ME --
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Based on the novel by Gaston Leroux

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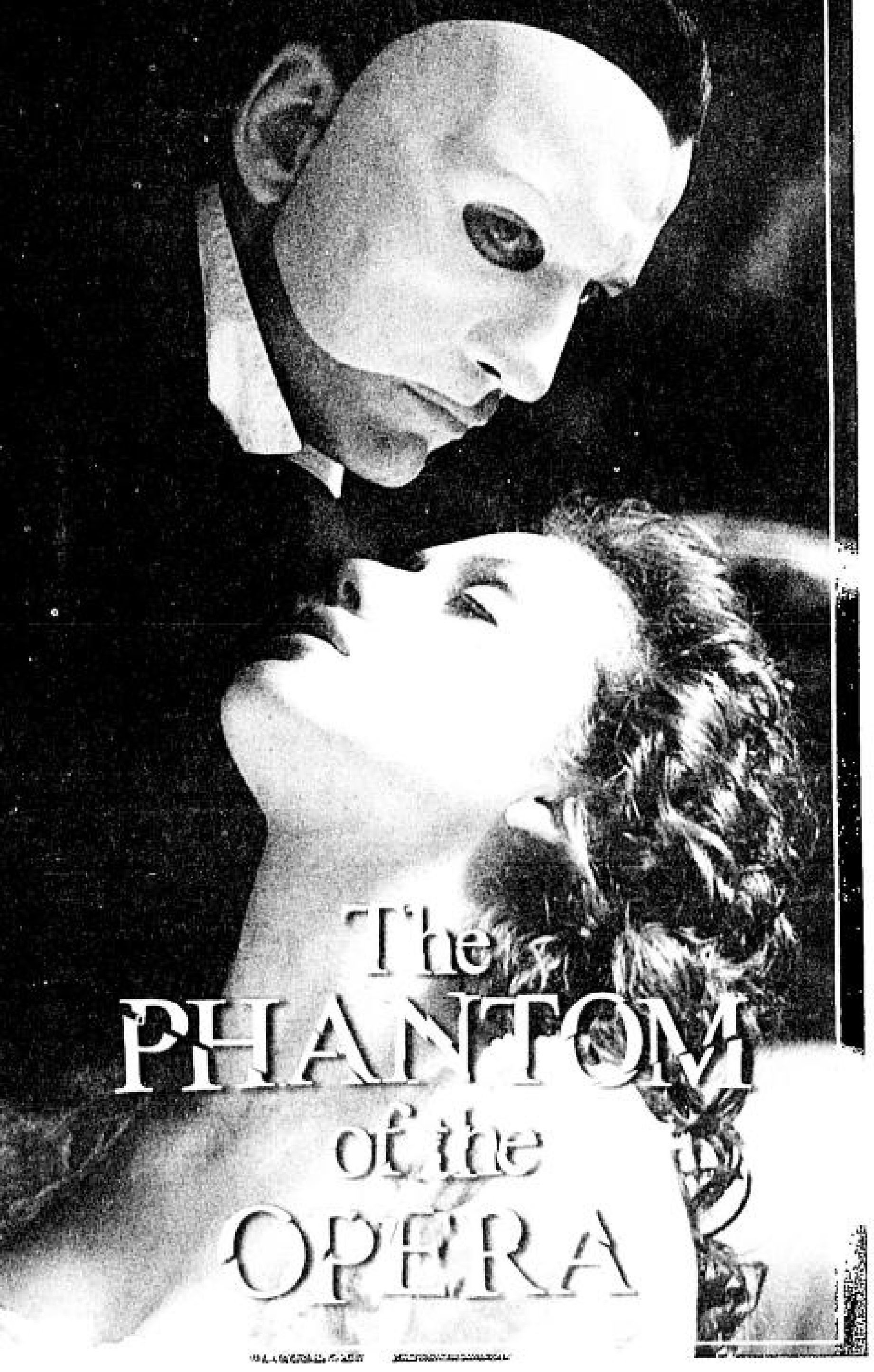
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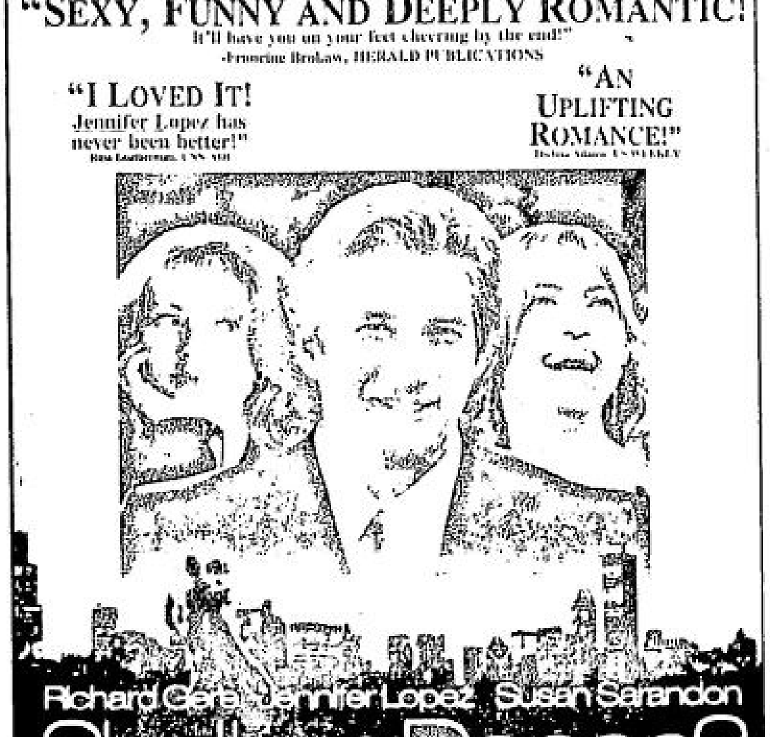
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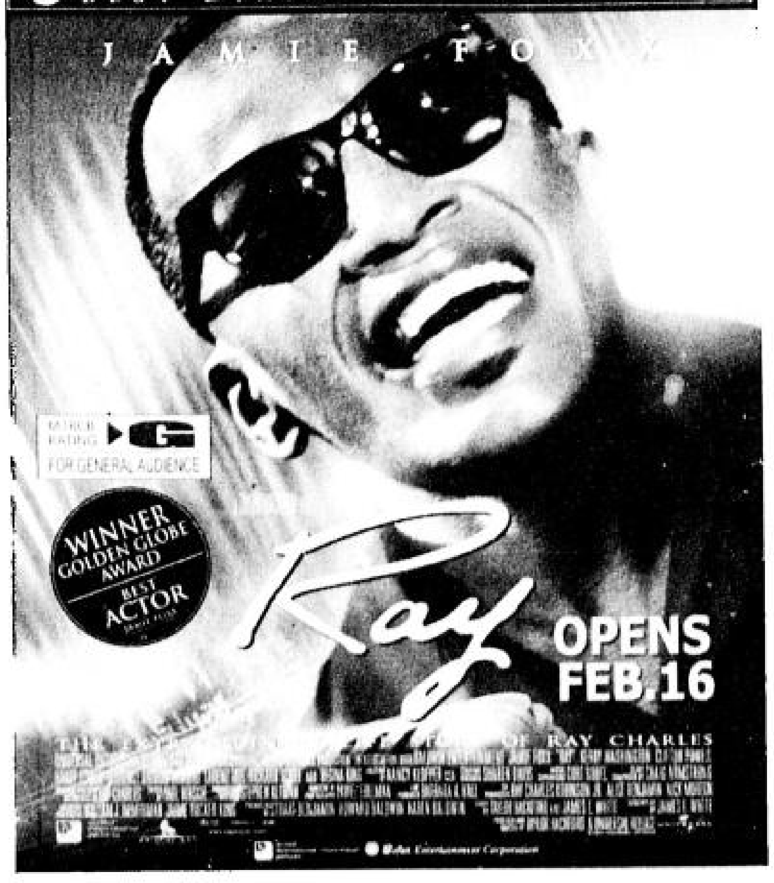
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New shows for ex-'MTB' hosts

But some will be better placed than others

ARNEL Ignacio and Ai Ai de las Alas

By Marinel R. Cruz

ARNEL IGNACIO, Ai-Ai de las Alas and Edu Manzano, the three "main hosts" of ABS-CBN's "MTB Ang Saya Saya," will be given new shows, following the airing last week of the noontime variety program's final episode, according to the Kapamilya network.

ABS-CBN told INQUIRER Entertainment on Monday that the new shows were "to be aired in the first quarter of 2005."

Industry sources said De las Alas and Ignacio would be cast in the same show, and Manzano would have his own.

The network did not mention plans for the other "MTB" hosts—Mickey Ferriols, Archie Alemania, Melissa Ricks and Joross Gamboa.

In a phone interview last Monday, Ignacio told the INQUIRER Entertainment that he was "still confused" about his status at ABS-CBN. His contract with the network expires this month.

"I have yet to hear from my bosses about the renewal of my contract," Ignacio said. "I've heard about plans for new shows, but we have not met to discuss those."

He wondered: "Why am I always the last to know? If ABS-CBN really had plans for me, I'm sure they would talk with me."

Team-up with Lucky

According to sources, De las Alas will have a new gag show with Ignacio and comedian Vhong Navarro, while Manzano will host an evening musical/talk show with his son, MYX video jock Luis.

One source said De las Alas and Ignacio would have another "spoof show" to air daily, after Willie Revillame's new noontime variety show, "Wowowee." On the other hand, the source added, the Manzanos' talk show would be similar to the 1990s' "Not so Late Night with Edu."

The senior Manzano, chair of the Optical Media Board, is seen regularly on the sitcom "OK, Fine, Whatever," with Aga Muhlach and Bayani Agbayani.

Melissa Ricks, from "Star Circle Quest," will reportedly appear in the TV version of Carlo Caparas' "Panday" as Jericho Rosales' leading lady. Rosales is taking on the role popularized in the 1970s by the late action king Fernando Poe Jr.

Ricks and Gamboa are part of the weekly youth-oriented show "SCQ Reloaded."

The source said Gamboa would join the cast of a drama *tele-serye* with Roxanne Guinoo, also from "SCQ," as his love interest.

Gamboa is currently seen on the musical-game-variety "Most Requested Show," with Roderick Paulate, Amy Perez and Marvin Agustin.

What about Mickey?

AJ Dee, Ahron Villena, Je Sison and Mike Cortez, collectively known as MTB's "TV Idols," are now cast members of "Most Requested Show."

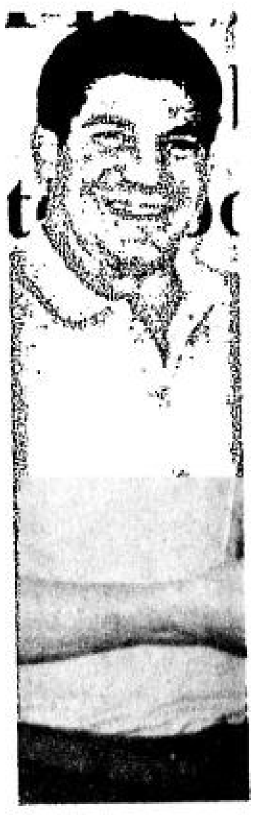
Dee also hosts a segment with Ann Curtis and Chocolate every Sunday on the show biz talk show "The Buzz."

The sources said the network had not thought up a project for Ferriols. Meanwhile, Ferriols' boyfriend, Archie Alemania, is seen on "Star Dance" with Agustin and Vanessa del Bianco, and on Studio 23's "Wazzup! Wazzup!"

"MTB Ang Saya Saya" used to be called "Magandang Tanghali Bayan," with Paulate, Perez, Revillame, Randy Santiago ,and John Estrada as hosts.

In 2003, the program reinvented itself as "Masayang Tanghali Bayan" in a bid to topple GMA 7's "Eat... Bulaga!" Paulate, Perez, Santiago and Estrada were dropped from the lineup of hosts.

In February 2004, Ignacio, De las Alas and Manzano came on board.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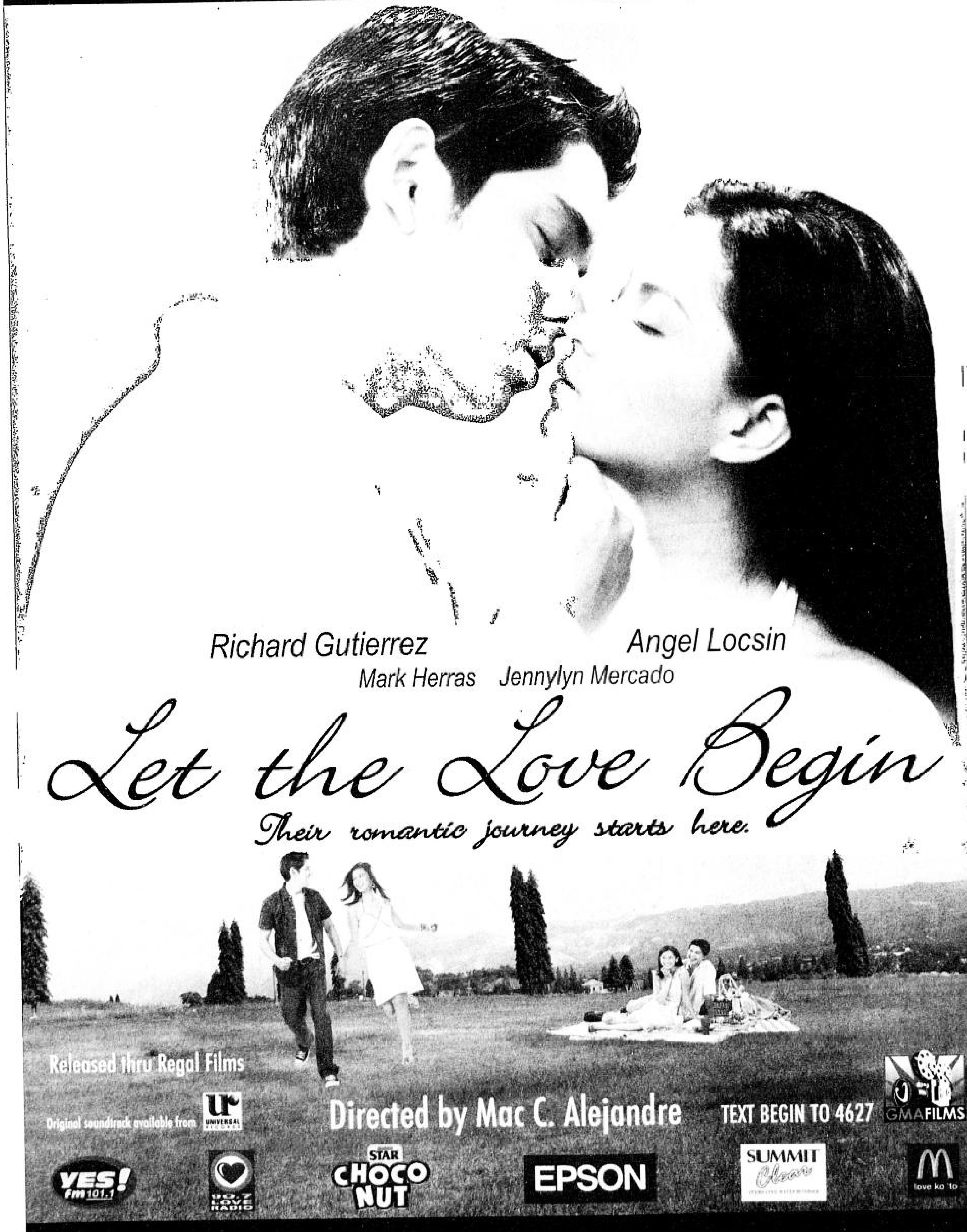

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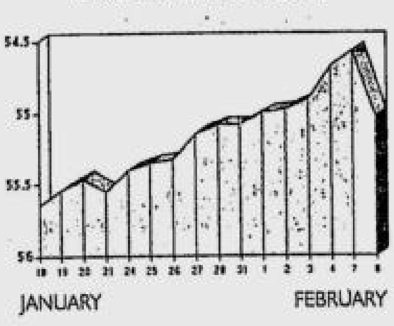

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Stocks hit highest in 5 years

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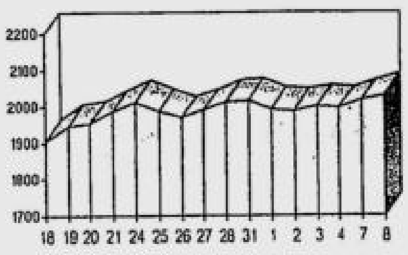

(See stock market report on Page B6)

THE MAIN Philippine stock index ended at the highest level in five years yesterday as investors continued to accumulate select stocks encouraged by improving economic fundamentals, traders said.

The benchmark 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index closed up 13.24 points, or 0.7 percent, at 2030.08—its highest finish since Feb. 9, 2000, when it ended at 2047.27. The index rose 1.1 percent on Monday.

Gainers led decliners 60 to 46, while 36 stocks were unchanged. Volume thinned to 2.69 billion shares valued at P1.93 billion from Monday's 2.88 billion shares worth P2.08 billion.

Foreign investors purchased P1.02 billion and sold P823.6 million worth of stock.

"The market has been in a consolidation mode the last week. Based on technicals at least, this week will be the upswing portion of the consolidation phase following the build up in momentum," said PCCI Securities president Francisco Liboro.

Liboro said investor sentiment continued to be buoyed by the favorable economic fundamentals. **AP**

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue will conduct a lifestyle check on doctors after its study revealed a high level of tax delinquency among medical professionals from the country's leading and high-end hospitals.

"These doctors do not issue receipts. They do not even have books of account," Revenue Deputy Commissioner Lilia Guillermo told reporters yesterday.

Guillermo said the BIR had already given notices to doctors from five leading hospitals in Metro Manila that they would be investigated. The notices were issued after the doctors failed to rectify last year their "doubtful" 2003 income tax returns despite repeated warnings by the revenue agency.

The lifestyle check will be the start of the BIR's campaign against tax delinquent but high-earning professionals, she said.

According to the BIR study, 37 percent of the doctors from the five top hospitals declared that their income for the whole of 2003 only fell within the range of P100,000 to P500,000. This meant that these doctors were earning only as much as average income earners do, a claim that the BIR considered unbelievable.

The study, which used income tax returns (ITRs) of 605 doctors as samples, also showed that a little more than 10 percent of these doctors claimed that they earned less than P100,000. Also, 4 percent of them claimed that they had no tax due at all.

"How can they afford rent in these luxurious hospitals and salaries of their staff if they are earning less than P100,000 a year?" Guillermo said.

The study also showed that 22.5 percent of these doctors declared that their incomes in 2003 fell within the P500,000-to-P1 million bracket. Twenty-nine percent said their incomes reached between P1 million and P5 million, and that only about one percent said they were earning between P1 million and P10 million.

Guillermo said that in the lifestyle check on the doctors, the BIR would make a checklist of the vehicles and the pieces of real property they own, the travels they made, and the schools where they send their children to school, among others.

Based on the data, Guillermo said, the BIR would predict the amount of tax liabilities of these doctors.

The BIR official also said that the revenue agency was able to detect tax dishonesty among doctors through their e-Raffle promo. In the promo, consumers were asked to text the serial numbers of the receipts they got from purchases of goods and services, and the amount they paid.

She cited one case wherein a patient reported to the BIR, through text messaging, that the

BIR/ B6

DOLLAR REBOUND

Peso back at 55 to $1

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO yesterday slipped back to the 55 level against the US dollar as the greenback rebounded across the globe following a tighter budget policy announced by the White House.

After hitting a 19-month high of 54.52 on Monday, the local currency weakened sharply after opening at 54.68 and breached the 55-level shortly before the close of trading at the Philippine Dealing System yesterday.

It finished at 55.03 to the dollar, shedding a hefty 46 centavos from Monday's close of 54.57 to the dollar, the biggest loss in a single day seen since the peso started its rally against the US dollar this year.

Volume at the spot foreign exchange market remained heavy at $476 million.

This developed as the US dollar surged to a two-month high against the Japanese yen and likewise extended its gains against the euro.

Traders said the technical correction did not come as a surprise as the local currency had to test 54.85-90 after the US dollar gained ground against other currencies.

"This is just a temporary respite of the market's bullishness," said a foreign exchange trader from a big local bank.

"It's a kneejerk reaction to the US dollar's uptrend as well as supply concerns over the holidays so there's a tight squeeze," the trader said.

It was the eve of the Chinese lunar calendar year yesterday, signaling the start of the the Year of the Rooster.

Other traders said some market players also took advantage of talks that the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas was buying dollars from the spot market and took positions against the local currency.

The White House presented on Monday one of the most austere presidential budgets in

PESO/ B6

Megaworld to spend ₱3B for CyberPark project

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

LEADING property developer Megaworld is spending P3 billion to develop a state-of-the-art office building at the Eastwood City CyberPark in Quezon City for the business process outsourcing and information technology sectors.

Megaworld said in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange that its board has approved the plan to undertake the project, dubbed 1880 Eastwood Avenue, in two phases.

The first phase, which will cost about P1.3 billion to P1.5 billion, will have a gross building area of 40,000 square meters. The second phase will have an area of about 50,000

MEGAWORLD/ B2

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Citing crisis, wood sector seeks lifting of logging suspension

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

AN ORGANIZATION of Filipino wood exporters is asking the government to lift the suspension of logging activities in the country.

The 88-member Philippine Wood Producers Association (PWPA) said in a press conference yesterday that its members were facing a "crisis" and the industry was in the brink of collapse. Its members have no other option but to close shop if the suspension would remain.

PWPA said the government's move to run after illegal loggers in Quezon Province, which was hit by flooding last December, covered the entire country and had adversely affected even industries and companies that were operating legally.

"The PWPA, representing the legitimate wood-based and wood-producing industries, makes this urgent appeal to President Macapagal-Arroyo to cause the Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to immediately lift the temporary suspension of logging in areas not affected by the calamities of December 2004," Evaristo Narvaez Jr., vice-president and spokesperson of PWPA, said.

The government's order to suspend logging activities was imposed last Dec. 8.

Narvaez said the prolonged suspension of logging activities would mean the massive shutdown in the next two weeks of its members' wood processing plants all over the country. These plants produce lumber, veneer and plywood, posts, poles and pulp. The country has an annual requirement of around 2 to 2.5 million cubic meters of industrial logs for local production and export commitments.

He said this was seen to result in the dislocation of some two million workers employed by these plants.

The collapse of the wood processing industry, it added, would mean the loss of some P20 billion in investments in plants, machinery and equipment in wood-based industries.

"Further, we will also lose our export market for wood products, particularly high value-added goods, worth P21 billion yearly," the group said.

The country exports plywood and finished lumber to the United States, Australia, Japan, Korea and Europe.

"Already, wood prices have gone up by 40 percent due to the tight supply of lumber and the high cost of import substitutes, adding pressure to the rising costs in the furniture, construction and mass housing sector. This ultimately hurts ordinary consumers who buy furniture, construction materials and other wood products," Narvaez said.

Sun earmarks $200M to put up cell sites

By Clarissa S. Batino

SUN Cellular of Gokongwei-owned Digitel Mobile Philippines Inc, is embarking on a $200-million network expansion this year.

The move aims to increase the number of its cellular sites nationwide to about 2,000, which can accommodate six million subscribers.

"We are spending $200 million for network roll-out this year," said James Go, vice chair of parent firm Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc.

Based on Digitel's latest count, Sun Cellular now has about 1.5 million subscribers, up from 1.1 million in end-2004.

The company expects to break-even on earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization when its subscriber base reaches 2.5 million.

Digitel senior vice president William Pamintuan said Sun's subscriber base had been increasing by about 6,000 each day, mainly due to the 24/7 plan that allows unlimited calls and texts within the network for P250 a month or P100 for 10 days.

Before 24/7 was launched in October, Sun Cellular had only 700,000 customers.

Major carriers Smart Communications Inc. and Globe Telecom Inc. have asked the National Telecommunications Commission to stop Sun Cellular from continuing to offer 24/7.

The two firms claimed the Gokongwei phone company was engaging in predatory and discriminatory pricing that was approved without going through a public hearing.

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McDonald's embarks on aggressive expansion

By Doris C. Dumlao

MCDONALD'S Philippines plans to double its store expansion this year to take advantage of robust consumer spending.

Kenneth Yang, managing, director of Golden Arches Development Corp. which operates the local McDonald's fast-food chain, said the company was planning a more "aggressive" expansion this year.

"We are looking at opening about 20 new stores," Yang said, noting that only about 10 new stores were opened last year.

The stores to be opened will be a combination of those wholly owned by Golden Arches as well as franchised outlets. Several outlets will be put up in the provinces.

Yang said McDonald's Philippines would soon open its first store in Zamboanga. He said the company was looking at putting up more stores in the Visayas and Mindanao, adding that there was still room for expansion in Metro Manila.

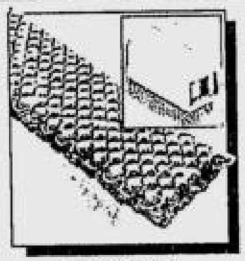
McDonald's has about 240 stores in the Philippines, said to be the only place in the world where the American fast-food giant is not number one. It is expected to step up efforts to catch up with local leader Jollibee Foods Corp.

The American fast-food chain started in the country in 1981 when George Yang, president of McGeorge Food Industries, was awarded the franchise for the Philippines by McDonald's International.

Publicly listed holding firm Alliance Global Inc., the holding company, is taking a 49-percent stake in McDonald's Philippines while George Yang will retain direct ownership of the remaining 51 percent.

Yang said there would be no "backdoor-listing" of McDonald's Philippines on the local stock exchange as only a minority stake in the fast-food business would be infused into AGI.

MCDONALD'S Philippines and Banco de Oro Universal Bank signed a deal that allows BDO to put up automated teller machines (ATMs) in at least 20 McDonald's stores. BDO initially started in McDonald's Greenbelt and Katipunan. The next target is McDonald's Eastwood in Libis.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Megaworld

From page B1

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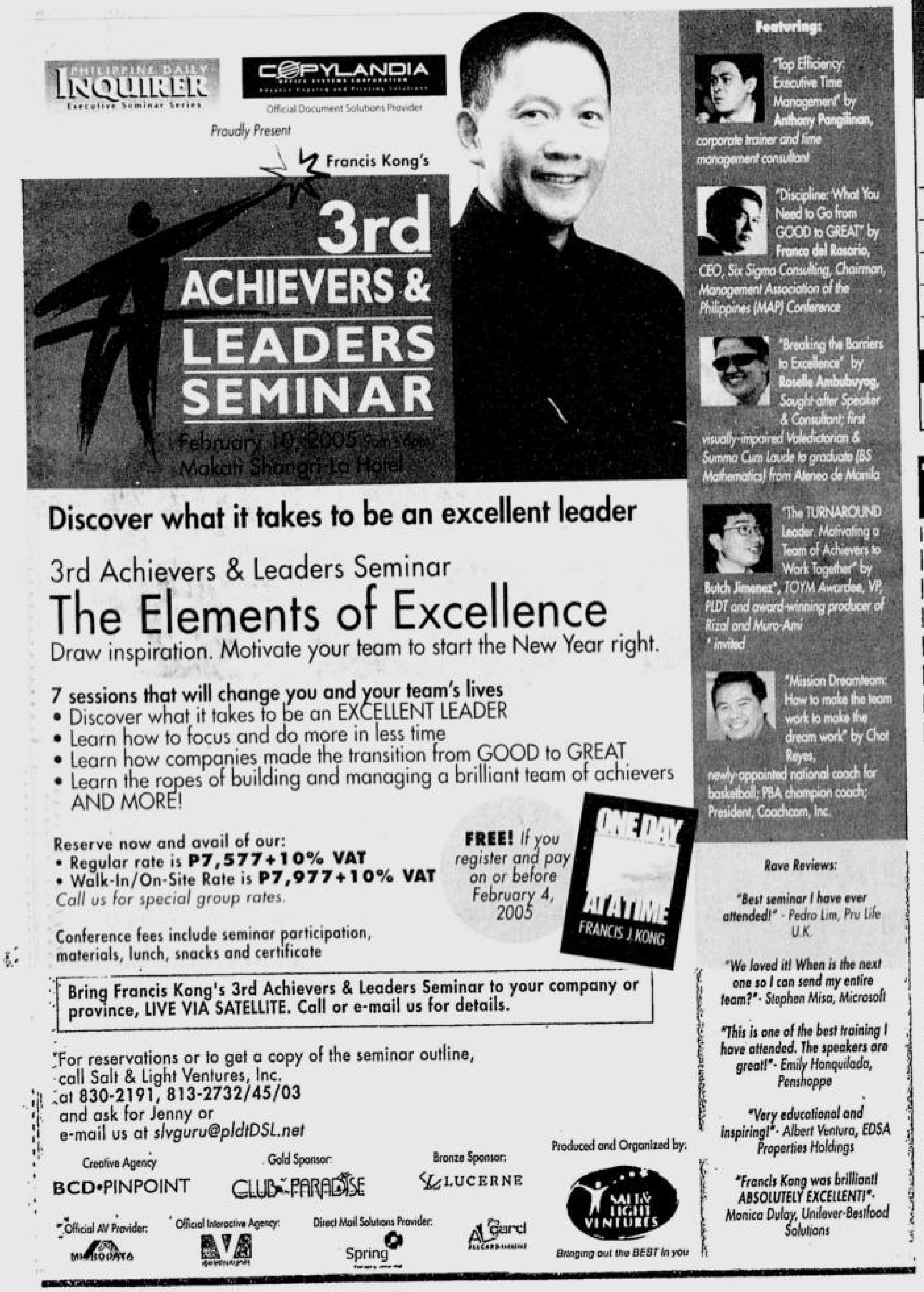
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George needs a Ty-lenol

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

IT LOOKS like the Taiwan operations of his Metrobank are giving taipan George Ty some headache.

According to the Taipei Times, the island's Financial Supervisory Commission not only fined the Philippine bank NT$5 million (about P8.68 million); the authorities want the Metrobank Taipei branch manager, Katie Kao, replaced, in connection with alleged irregularities.

The Taiwan authorities imposed the record fine after an audit showed that Metrobank Taichung branch manager Jason Chen embezzled US$2.66 million in bank funds last year.

Chen had already been dismissed and has been banned from banking for five years, the newspaper reported last Friday.

In addition, the Financial Supervisory Commission wants Metrobank to pump in an additional NT$45 million (more than P78 million) capital into the Taiwan operations, to improve the branches' financial ratios.

Metrobank said that the fine had already been paid, and the additional NT$45-million capital already remitted by the Manila headquarters, increasing Metrobank Taiwan's net assets to more than NT$300 million.

Metrobank president Antonio Abacan said that the Taichung problem had already been "isolated," with charges having been filed way back in June 2004 against the former branch manager after a thorough investigation.

"Consequently, changes were effected at the management level to further strengthen operations," Abacan said in a press statement.

To comply with the wishes of the Taiwanese authorities, a new branch manager from the Philippines will take over the Taipei operations beginning next month, Metrobank said.

Semirara choke point

THE CASH-FLUSH Semirara Mining Corp. has failed to persuade the Cebu-based Court of Appeals to lift a lower court injunction ordering the coal mine operator to vacate the overlapping grazing land being claimed by another party.

The adverse party, Henry G. Lim, has applied for a break-open order with the Regional Trial Court in Culasi, Antique, so he could reclaim the 367 hectares of disputed grazing land that has been fenced off and kept away from him by Semirara.

Semirara, in turn, claims the Department of Environment and Natural Resources had already cancelled Lim's grazing concession for failure to pay the annual fees and submit grazing reports.

The disputed land covers about a tenth of Semirara's mining claims in the island, right next to Semirara's Panian mine. Semirara has built a road, several large buildings and a conveyor belt on the site.

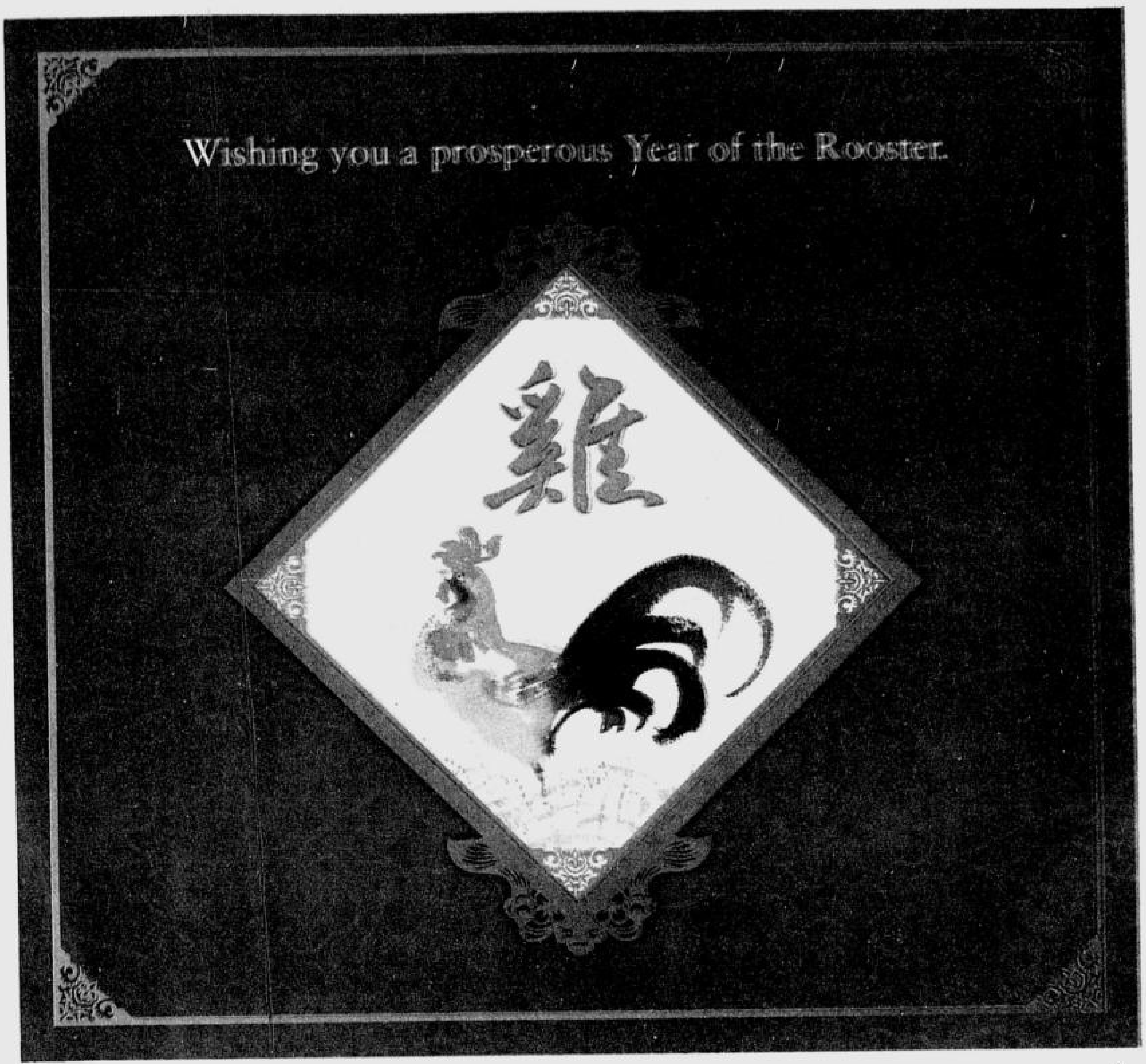
Incidentally, Lim's counsel is former Solicitor General Frank Chavez, whose use of armored personnel carrier and SWAT police to break the Chemphil standoff in the early 90s has become a legal legend.

Money-go-round

- FIL-AM computer wizard Diosdado Banatao has again been included in Forbes magazine's annual "The Midas List," rising to number 42 from the previous year's 58, on the back of yet another success of his latest venture capital foray.
- The last high-end open space at the Fort adjoining the Manila Golf Club, currently wasting away as parking space in front of the popular UCC Terrace Café, will finally be developed.

Lot owner Philippine Realty has agreed to a joint venture with ICTSI's Enrique Razon Jr., developer Alfred Xerez-Burgos Jr., and ex-Philtown president Raul Martinez, with the latter group putting in capital and

COCKTALES/ B6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'I am looking for better opportunities!'

By Tita Datu Puangco

Advice
FOR THE ANXIOUS PERSON AT WORK

I'VE been looking for better opportunities outside my present job. I have extensive knowledge in quality, environment, health and safety assurance. I'm a management consultant for a consulting firm.

What gives me pressure is not the day-to-day operational activities that go with project management but finding new clients. Since I was given the task of heading the consulting department, I should ensure that there are enough projects to sustain our monthly operations (e.g. salaries, rent). I'm being groomed as an industrial partner of our company but I heard sad stories from close friends who were made industrial partners. When the company suffered losses, they had to lay off and delay the employees' salaries. I am afraid the same fate awaits me if I stick to the same arrangement considering that business losses are results of many factors, which are sometimes beyond our control.

I realized that I would be better off working in an industrial setup where I don't have to worry about the staff's salaries, and just focus on the performance of my department like I used to do. Since my training and experience have been in systems development and improvement, these are the areas where I will make my contributions to any industrial company.

We are a lean and mean organization. We keep our operational costs at manageable level, but not enough to provide additional benefits like I used to have with my previous company.

I made some calls and replied to job advertisements in the papers. What else do I need to do to improve my chances of getting my dream job?

Back To Corporate

ILLUSTRATION BY DIONISIO BUCCAT

I understand you perfectly. I run a training and consulting company myself. I recognize that some professionals are not made to play the "entrepreneur" role. At best, they are good at the "producer" role. When a person moves from a stable corporation to a startup venture, one needs to change mindset. This means, as a consultant of ours would say, "to get ready to be a triathlon athlete," competent in selling, project management and account management. This means one has to train up for said competencies. You have to be mentally prepared to assume roles you never played before.

Actually, you have three choices. One is to improve your current performance as head of the consulting practice by focusing on landing projects and not just servicing them. Two is to go back to a corporate job where many things are predictable and you don't have to do the selling. Three is to offer to do project management consulting on a part-time basis and find a teaching job in a university for some days in the week.

If you go for option one, you need to have your heart into your job. This means pursuing your improvement area with passion. You have to understand and learn what it takes to land a project. Try to learn from the more senior consultants. Find out what it takes to succeed. You would need time on your side, if you take this option. Make sure you have savings that could tide you over the difficult times.

If you go for option two, you can seek out jobs through print ads or through the Internet. But still, the better way is to inquire from your friends, relatives and acquaintances if they know of companies with vacancies in your area of specialization. Writing this letter is also likely to trigger a response from companies who have a need for a specialist in your areas. You did not tell me much about your background. If you are an early retiree, you may experience challenges along the way. Typically, these positions for which you qualify have starting rather than senior positions as vacancies. You will then be competing with people two to three years away from university.

You can also go for option three. If you have a master's, you can apply for an instructor position in a college or university. The academe is always in need of people who bring in the classroom not simply theories but practice and experiences based on real life situations. You might want to talk to your boss and back track in terms of career. Be candid and admit that you prefer to simply do project delivery work and you will do other things like teaching.

All the best and God bless you!

(Ms Puangco is CEO and chair of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting. Send feedback through e-mail to advice@ancillaedc.com.ph *or fax to 892-2902.)*

How does your salary compare to what others are getting?

WORKING WOUNDED

Bob Rosner

DEAR Readers: If we had x-ray vision, most of us wouldn't want to look inside of walls or under people's clothing. We'd want to be able to see how our paychecks stack up to the people we work with. We turned to Tim Driver of Salary.com, the top provider of online salary information, for help.

WW: How do you collect the data for your salary search engine?

TD: We continually collect, review and analyze hundreds of published compensation surveys, covering more than two million individuals working at tens of thousands of companies across the US and Canada. We then develop a consensus estimate of the market based on all available sources. All data points are updated monthly.

WW: Any advice for people trying to seek salary information?

TD: It's important to read the job description, and not just the title, to make sure the description is close to the job. If it isn't a good match, the data won't be either. Also, people reading job descriptions should be honest with themselves about their roles and responsibilities. Read the job descriptions the way your boss or your human resources representative would.

WW: Any advice for someone using online salary search information?

TD: Plan ahead, carefully research your case and position your case as a win-win. Remember that the negotiation is not about strong-arm tactics or win/lose; it's a two-way process where you and your prospective employer are each trying to get something you need. In a negotiation, you're both designing the terms of a transaction so that each of you will receive the maximum benefit from the final agreement. Try to think of your interaction as a salary discussion rather than a salary negotiation. A discussion is more cooperative rather than confrontational.

WW: Any warnings?

TD: The most important advice is that people should be prepared. We hear from many human resources departments that the most successful salary discussions occur when the employee has taken the time to research his or her position and understand the various nuances of pay philosophies and pay policies. Many of the people reporting back to us about their successful negotiations emphasize the importance not only the data in our Personal Salary Reports but the accompanying advice on how to present it persuasively to their employer.

WW: Any final thoughts?

TD: With the job market beginning to improve in many regions of the US and many employees indicating a willingness to make a job change in 2004 (our polls show more than four in five say they'll make such a change), we are predicting an increase in employees' negotiating leverage with employers. Helping to confirm our own observations on this is the fact that our web site these days is experiencing significantly higher demand for both our free and personalized information.

We all can't be Superman, but we all can know how our salary stacks up against what other people are getting paid. Next time we'll explore what you can learn from online assessments.

Here are the results from a recent workingwounded.com/ABCnews.com online ballot: Which best describes your feelings about salaries where you work?

—I have no interest in knowing, 15.9 percent

—I know what other people are paid, 28.8 percent

—I'd love to know what other people are paid, 55.1 percent

(Mr. Rosner, an internationally syndicated columnist, author and speaker, is based in Seattle, Washington, USA. E-mail him at bob@workingwounded.com.*)*

Expand your sense of vision

By Dr. Tony Alessandra, Ph.D.

ILLUSTRATION BY DIONISIO BUCCAT

1. **LISTEN to your yearnings.** Don't dismiss your daydreams, or for that matter, your nocturnal dreams, either. They may be signals from your mind and body of some unconscious attraction. And don't listen just to those that fall under the heading of "money" or "things." Think about nonmonetary, nonmaterial rewards such as a job you'd love or more quality time with your family or doing something to help mankind. What's important is what's important to you personally.

Sometimes it's helpful to recall your childhood or youth. What propelled your dreams back then? Where did your imagination take you? What most influenced you?

Chuck Williams, for instance, got his first taste of fine cooking at age seven from his grandmother, who owned a restaurant. He didn't go to college, but instead worked as a mechanic, then a contractor in Sonoma, California, where he also was involved with a local cooking group. Then he became fascinated with the kitchen equipment he saw while on a trip to France.

Two years later, he bought a hardware shop to which he later added housewares and cookware. The store was an instant success and the seed of what would become the Williams-Sonoma retailing empire of upscale kitchen stores, cookbooks, accessories, and catalog sales. Williams, who readily admitted to having few management skills, made up for that in creativity and instinct—and in following up on his fond childhood memories and interest in cooking.

And it's not just the fun or fanciful moments you should recall. If you were poor, maybe helping others escape poverty could be your mission as an adult. If you were abused, maybe abuse prevention is an area where, in your heart of hearts, you would like to make a difference.

2. **Seek feedback.** "Unfortunately," said Dr. Norman Vincent Peale, "most people would rather be ruined by praise than saved by criticism." But getting others to give you honest, constructive feedback may help put your mission and your goals in perspective. They may uncover a diamond you thought was just a pebble, thus sending you off in a better direction.

You should be able to get a source of feedback for free from friends and colleagues. But if you can't, hire it. It soon will pay for itself.

3. **Focus on your strengths.** You may have heard the adage, "Don't try to teach a pig to sing—it wastes your time and annoys the pig." Too often we try to force ourselves to become detail people when we're not, or to climb the management ranks when what we enjoy and excel at is the rank-and-file work.

Ask yourself: What am I really good at? What do I most enjoy? And think about a mission and goals related to those answers.

4. **Identify and manage your weaknesses.** While concentrating on your strengths, do all you can to keep your weaknesses from dragging you down, either in terms of performance or just in the sense of taking up a lot of your time with fretting.

If you're great at sales but terrible at filling out reports, for example, maybe you ought to hire a part-time administrative assistant or swap duties with another employee so you'll have the time to sell and formulate your ideas about better ways to sell.

5. **Ask yourself: "What's in it for me?"** As you select your dream or goal, keep asking yourself, "Why do I want this?" and "What's in it for me?" That sounds selfish, but it's a way to keep on track and make sure you're not superimposing someone else's goals on your own. Should or ought need to take a backseat to what feels right and comfortable for you.

So look for the personally compelling reason. "My father always wanted me to follow in his footsteps" or "My boss thinks this is a good plan for me" are not good answers because a mission is not a duty or a task; it's a dream. And if the dream doesn't excite you, then it's probably not a good match.

6. **Write a mission statement.** Answer the question, in writing: What is it that I would really, really

EXPAND/ B5

How jobseekers look for jobs

PEOPLE AT WORK *Pulse*

PEOPLE at Work and the Ateneo Center for Organization Research and Development (Ateneo CORD) partner to listen to the heartbeats of working people through this People at Work Pulse. The results of this "pulse" will be published the following month. To quicken your response rates, Philippine Daily Inquirer and Ateneo CORD will be giving gift packages to two respondents to be drawn from those who replied for the month.

Winners from respondents of last month's survey are **Cherrylene Rodriguez** and **Delio Ando Dapanas** (please contact Ateneo CORD to claim your prizes).

1. How long have you been looking for a job? ______________________________

2. What factors do you consider when applying? Check as many as you can.
____ a. Company name
____ b. Industry type
____ c. Company type (i.e. multinational, government, family business)
____ d. Position category
____ e. Location
____ f. Work schedule
____ g. Compensation
____ h. Part-time/ full-time
____ i. Others: ____________________

3. What methods have you used during job search? Check as many as you can.
____ a. Newspaper job ads
____ b. TV and radio ads
____ c. Phone inquiries
____ d. Web-based job search
____ e. Posting resumé on the web site
____ f. Hand-carry resumé to various companies
____ g. Job fairs
____ h. Networking
____ Others: ____________________

4. How many companies have you applied to? ______________________________

5. Of all the companies you have applied to, give the percentage of those that:
____ Give feedback
____ Give feedback when I follow-up
____ No feedback

6. Approximately, how long (in days) do these organizations respond to your initial application? ____________________

7. When companies respond to your initial application, what processes do you go through next? Please check all that apply.
____ a. Interviews
____ b. Panel interview
____ c. Assessment centers
____ d. In-basket exercises
____ e. Written exams
____ f. Physical exams
____ g. Others: ______________

Name: ______________________________
Gender__________ Age: ______ Civil Status: __________
Nature of Job: ______________________________
Company Name: ______________________________
Industry: ______________________________
Tel./Mobile/E-mail: ______________________________

Mail or fax this form or email/text your answers to:
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Fax no. (632) 426-6065, E-mail: ateneocord@admu.edu.ph
Or text answers to (0920) 831-9522. Write: topic 1. (answer), 2. (answer), etc. name, gender, status, position, company, address, contact numbers or e-mail.

Love and the retrenched

By Loree Cruz-Mante
Contributor

HOW does one who has just been let go (aka retrenched), celebrate Valentine's Day? Not too differently perhaps, since love is a many-splendored thing whether you are monied or penniless, employed or jobless.

But then again, perhaps, Valentine's Day will not—and cannot—be the same. Back then you had a job. Now you don't.

No excuse

The fact that you are out of a job on Valentine's Day 2005, however, does not mean that you should pass up the chance for love. It is, after all, a day to show your beloved that your love is not weather-dependent. It is for all seasons! Your no-job situation just means you may have to do your Day of the Hearts somewhat differently.

These thoughts might help you celebrate Love without letting retrenchment impinge on your resolve.

Don't deny or pretend

At the core of celebrating should be an acceptance of your current reality. The worst thing to do on this occasion is to deny that you are where you are, and to pretend that all is well, that nothing has changed. The truth is that a lot has changed, and it would be well for you to accept that as part of your present situation. The change may be pleasant or unpleasant (depending on your perception), but it is there. Valentine's Day this year is like no other.

For those who walked away from their companies with a fat retrenchment package, this may be the chance to do something you've always dreamed of doing but could not quite afford. This may be the much-awaited time to indulge your spouse for many years of waiting for that fondest wish to become real. Just be sure you can really afford it, meaning you don't indulge and then pound your head thinking of what's left in your coffers. And may I suggest that you do so within strict limits you impose on yourself. Don't take out your fantasy on your credit card if you don't know how to pay for it later! Pay in cash if you have to, if only to be very visual about money slipping out your fingers.

Get real

For those who walked away with no package or with practically nothing (after deductions for loans and the like), work out what you can reasonably afford. Showing love need not be expensive, and not having money should certainly not be an excuse. If you used to date in a fancy restaurant, this time consider a romantic after-dinner date in your own lawn, porch or veranda. Coffee or juice would do, even water for that matter. Just send the kids to bed, light up the scented candles, and enjoy the evening!

Or you can find equally enjoyable thrills that do not cost anything, like a stroll on the baywalk, in the park or mall, or a free concert, or a drive through The Fort at night. Even a date of *balut* and *asin* at the steps of a building in UP sounds exciting! Or you may want to consider a group date instead, where you can jointly celebrate the day with other couple friends and share in the costs.

Be creative

Creativity is something you will definitely need in looking for your next job, so start practicing with Valentine's Day. Convert your *sala* into a bistro, "kidnap" your spouse to an undisclosed place, put a *cartolina* heart on his or her spectacles, write love notes on the bathroom mirror. Or why not do something outrageous, like giving a plastic ring to your girlfriend and saying that it will "transform" into a real engagement ring when you find a job, or write a poem to your boyfriend entitled, "I love you even if…"

Don't banish those thoughts you might consider corny at first. When your wallet is empty (or will soon be), nothing is corny. You can't afford to give in to consumerism. The stuff in the malls are just shortcuts to spare you from thinking of creative ways to get your message across. If you really dig deep into who you are, there are a million more ways that are far better and more uniquely personal. Let your beloved fall in love with you all over again, not your greeting cards and fancy gifts of which there are a hundred others of the same edition.

Plan ahead

Now, more than in Valentine's Days past, you can ill afford to have foul-ups. You can't afford scenarios that will throw you off your budget. When you had a job, you could probably consider a taxi when the jeepneys were full, or go regular course when the value meals were unavailable. Sorry, but that's not the way it is now.

For those whom money is not an issue, you still need to plan. If a Hong Kong trip or a diamond ring is how you want to celebrate, that should be fine as long as you know this is part of a plan you have carefully worked out. Don't let things go sour because you didn't anticipate the snags. In the end, you are responsible for those choices and no one else.

Don't let pressures drive you

Keeping self-respect intact is one of the biggest challenges of being retrenched. There are many ways to do this, but putting undue importance on people's expectations is certainly not one of them. Being seen at a plush hotel for Valentine's Day dinner is not the way to boost one's self-esteem, especially if the reason is "so my friends and clients will not pity me." Retrenchment is not the same as being fired, and should not carry the same stigma. Retrenchment happens because that's the way things are in the world of work these days. Coping with such a matter-of-fact situation should, therefore, be just that, a matter of fact.

If the pressure comes from your beloved, it's about time you sit down and talk. If it is your spouse, explore whatever happened to the "for richer, for poorer" part of the vow. Being retrenched is bad enough; don't let it eat up your marriage, too. If the pressure is from you, take a second look. If this is how he or she copes with a situation like this while you still are not man and wife, perhaps you should think again. Like dengue fever, there is no immunity to retrenchment, and it isn't exclusive to unmarried couples either.

ILLUSTRATION BY DIONISIO [illegible]

You're entitled to celebrate

People who have been retrenched have every right to celebrate Valentine's Day, just like everyone else. Retrenchment is just one of the many seasons of life, and chances are you will be out of it sooner than you think. The important thing is that you do not allow it to destroy the one cherished and valued love relationship that can be a potent force in helping you cope with this and other periods of testing in your life. Your partner is still your best bet for successfully facing life and its challenges head-on.

In fact, if you so choose, you can make this Valentine's Day the best ever! Unearthing your creativity and challenging your resourcefulness to look for wondrous ways to say "How do I love thee? Let me count the ways…" is one of the most memorable lessons you can learn from being retrenched.

It doesn't seem likely that love and retrenchment are compatible, but you can prove that they can be. Love does not discriminate or single you out for disenfranchisement. Valentine's Day is Valentine's Day, and don't let anyone tell you that you can't own the day simply because you've been retrenched.

(Loree Cruz-Mante is a Human Resources and Organization Development practitioner, published writer, editor, and graphic designer. She is also a consultant in a leading outplacement firm, Drake Beam Morin [Philippines], where she helps retrenched employees through their career transition. Send feedback to lcmante@yahoo.com.*)*

Get the best pieces for the mosaic of your life

WORKING MOM
An Mercado Alcantara

IT IS TIME for our stroll. Diego, now sturdy and confident on his almost-three-year-old legs, streaks out the door. This is his favorite time of the weekend, when he can wander through the family compound in San Pablo, trek down the dusty country road and stop at various houses to pay his respects to waiting grand aunts. He likes to think he is the trailblazer on these walks and that momsie or lala (his groovy grandmother) are mere tag-alongs who don't know much about the magic of afternoon walks except to trace a route from A to B. In many ways he is correct.

I see the country road as simply the shortest way from house to house. With my every step, I worry if the aunts are home and if they will indeed welcome Diego's intrusion into their placid afternoon. Lala frets about the dust on the road, the February afternoon chill, and the way these combine to trigger her asthma. She's all bundled up for this walk, eager to take shelter at the nearest stop. Diego doesn't even see the road. He sees instead a dry river bed where armies of red ants collide, where berries fall into black mounds on the ground, where dust storms are born with a shove of his hand, and where a hundred tiny moths spring to life at the sound of his footsteps. For him, the stroll is not about getting to the end of the road, it's about the many stops and the many starts that open up new worlds. I have much to learn from Diego.

Improvising life

The profound lesson of these afternoon strolls didn't hit me until I meandered into the pages of a book called "Composing A Life" by Mary Catherine Bateson. The book proposes an exciting idea for working moms. She proposes that the road to achievement doesn't have to be a straight journey toward a specific end. Instead it can be, as it has been for many working moms, an "improvisational art" where achievements are done in "scraps of rescued space and time, in roles that have had to be invented again and again." The interruptions in our life, our conflicting priorities, and our crisis moments are, and should be seen as, a source of wisdom.

In other words, although our career may not look like a neat progression on a resumé "what with the maternity leaves we've had to take, the jobs we've had to quit to take care of our kids, the career slow-downs we've had to endure because our family needed us." It nevertheless represents a rich journey. Our multiple commitments and multiple beginnings make us intellectually flexible, open to change, and masters of self innovation. While remaining faithful to our family, we have reinvented ourselves, explored, improvised, and learned more life skills than those who have stayed only on a single inflexible course.

Work of art

Our life is a mosaic of many pieces, we never know where the best pieces may come from, so we have to be open to the many ways these may come to us. When we learn to see the interruptions in our life not as aberrations but opportunities to turn our life into a work of art, then a sense of wonder is reborn in us.

Today, as you work your way through your epic to-do list, take a different approach to the interruptions that come your way. That unplanned trip to the bookstore because your daughter needs *cartolina* (again!), that irritating text message about an unpaid cell phone bill, that urgent meeting your boss has called, that change in management's plans, see these as roads to new worlds you can fleet in and out of. Make a few stops along the way: watch the way people weave through your life like army ants on a dry road, look into the nuggets of wisdom falling in mounds around you, and whip up a sandstorm of dreams. And if you must make that radical decision to shift to another road in your career, don't be afraid to explore it. Who knows what you might discover? Who knows what new you may emerge from the stroll?

(An Mercado-Alcantara is founding editor of Working Mom magazine published by ABS-CBN Publishing, Inc. Your thoughts and ideas on work-life balance are welcome at an_alcantara@abs.pinoycentral.com.*)*

Expand your vision

From page B4

like to do that would utilize my strengths and make a difference? Don't worry at first about the logic or how this mission might be accomplished. It's not a plan. It's an expression of values.

Once you've got it, you may want to modify it over the years as your priorities and beliefs change. But, in any event, get the mission down on paper. Then you can figure out how best to achieve it.

7. **Take time to get away.** It's important to carve out some time to let your mind wander. Get off by yourself now and then, without the phone, fax, beeper, or TV. Unleash your imagination and see where it roams. Listen to what your heart tells you.

8. **Deal with distractions.** On the route to achieving your dream, you'll find change, risk, surprise, stress and perhaps even failure. But if you're committed, you'll adapt.

"Gee," you might say to yourself, "I've never run a marathon in a hailstorm before. It'll probably slow me down, but it'll slow the others down, too. Meanwhile, it'll give me experience running in unusual conditions, and it won't necessarily divert me from my goal of completing a marathon."

9. **Stay in the here and now.** One of life's hardest lessons is that you can only affect the future by staying in the present. If you let your mind wander into the past and what might have been, or into the future and what problems could await you there, you'll likely lose your way.

Avoiding these extremes is what athletes call "the zone." They're not obsessing about last week's defeat or thinking ahead to how powerful next week's team is. Instead, they're fully engrossed in the process of doing the best they can, right now.

10. **Do it!** "The best way to predict your future," says management guru Peter F. Drucker, "is to create it." Once you know your mission and goals, that's the time to get down to doing it.

It's so in every field of endeavor. Writers must sit down and write; salespeople must sell; managers must manage; and painters must paint. Too often, though, people are locked into habits that prevent them from moving ahead. They relive yesterdays, they invent excuses, they procrastinate, they doodle in the margins of life's tablet instead of seeking to write their signature boldly. So don't give up on your dreams but, instead, pursue them with passion.

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A1-133 Series of 2005

RP bourse rates best in Asia

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange emerged as the best performing bourse among its neighboring counterparts for January, with the PSE Composite Index surging 10.8 percent or 196.73 points to 2,019.56 from 1,822.83 in December last year, the PSE said in a statement.

Year-on-year, the Index soared 33.9 percent from 2004's 1,508.30. Trading volume was significantly higher at 71.9 billion shares, or 877.2 percent higher from the 7.4 billion shares in the same period last year. Value turnover rose 92.4 percent at P40,503.4 million compared with P21,050.0 million in January 2004.

Last year, the PSE made it as the second best performer among its neighbors, climbing 26.4 percent or 380.5 points at 1,822.83 from 1,442.37 in 2003, stocks officials said.

Trailing behind the PSE for the January market performance is the Stock Exchange of Thailand, which grew by 5.1 percent. The Jakarta Stock Exchange, the best performing neighboring exchange in 2004, landed on the third spot with a 4.5 percent growth rate.

Five exchanges, on the other hand, posted declines: the Shenzen Stock Exchange and the Shanghai Stock Exchange, both in China; the Tokyo Stock Exchange; Taiwan Stock Exchange; and the Hong Kong Stock Exchange.

"Starting the year with such high note indeed places our stock market back in the portfolio of both domestic and foreign investors, consistent with our corporate vision to become a peer among the premier exchanges in the region in the next couple of years," said Francis Lim, PSE president and chief executive officer.

"Such bullish sentiment can be attributed to the string of good news that greeted us in recent months—the higher-than-expected GDP growth, the concrete measures undertaken by government to address the fiscal deficit, the strengthening of the peso, the Supreme Court decision opening up the mining industry to foreigners and the series of positive news at the corporate front," Lim added.

The government was able to outperform its fiscal deficit goal for the second consecutive year at P186.1 billion, P11.7 billion below the P197.8 billion program and likewise set 2005 fiscal deficit target at about P180.0 billion, 7.0 percent lower than the previous P193.3 billion programmed level.

With the recent passage of the lateral attrition or accountability reform bill into law, the stage is set for the expected economic turnaround for the country.

Overseas workers remittances rose 27.7 percent to $740 million in November 2004 from last year's level.

This development has been attributed to the growing number of Filipinos working abroad, sustained marketing campaign by commercial banks and seasonal transfers for the holiday season.

For the January to November period, cumulative remittances amounted to $7.7 billion, 11.0 percent higher than the $6.9 billion posted a year ago, exceeding government forecast of 6.0 percent 2004 annual growth, according to the PSE.

Benguet to raise $1.3B for mining

MINING company Benguet Corp., whose shares have doubled this year on hopes of a mining boom, yesterday said it was talking to Japanese and Chinese investors about raising $1.3 billion to fund nickel and copper projects.

Benguet could be a major beneficiary of a government drive to attract offshore investment in the Philippine mining industry—a drive that coincides with a growing Chinese appetite for raw materials.

Shares in the country's oldest mining firm have soared this year after an initial court ruling backed foreign investment, outperforming an 8.7-percent rise for the Philippine market's mining sector index.

A Japanese group that included Sumitomo Corp. and Sojitz Holdings Corp. had expressed keen interest in a nickel mining project in Zambales, according to Benguet.

"There are some negotiations being undertaken," Benguet officials said.

The firm said it needed at least $800 million to do detailed exploration and to develop its nickel property in Zambales.

Benguet also said it had signed last week a memorandum of agreement to allow Metallurgical Corp. of China to conduct due diligence on its nickel property and an adjacent area owned by a local firm, Eramen.

Benguet, formed in 1903 and the pioneer of large-scale mining in the Philippines, said it would release other details of the project soon.

The Philippines, sitting on what the government estimates is $1-trillion in unexplored mineral wealth, wants local and foreign mining firms to pump about $6 billion into 23 priority projects over the next six years—investment that would spin off royalties and taxes to help plug a chronic government budget deficit.

Last week, the country rolled out the welcome mat to foreign investors at an international mining conference for nearly 300 delegates from Australia, Canada, China, Hong Kong, Japan, Germany, Taiwan and South Africa.

The three-day conference was held a day after the Philippine Supreme Court rejected an appeal by tribal groups opposed to a government decision to allow 100 percent foreign ownership of mines. *Reuters*

S&P reviews San Miguel rating

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

INTERNATIONAL credit rating firm Standard & Poor's Ratings Services said yesterday it was reviewing the effect of San Miguel Corp.'s possible acquisition of Australian dairy firm National Foods Ltd. on the food and beverage giant's credit quality.

S&P said in statement, however, that the foreign currency rating on San Miguel's paper was "constrained by that on the Philippine Sovereign," which means that the firm's rating was pegged to that of Philippine debt notes.

San Miguel's foreign currency rating is pegged at BB- with a stable outlook.

San Miguel has been attracting investor interest due to its aggressive international expansion moves.

It recently made a takeover offer for all of the issued ordinary shares in National Foods at A$6 a share.

The cash offer values National Foods at A$1.78 billion or US$1.35 billion, beating the earlier offer by New Zealand's Fonterra Co-operative Group Ltd. at A$5.45 a share.

The proposed acquisition is in line with San Miguel's ambition to expand its presence in the Asia-Pacific market for non-alcoholic beverages and food.

The acquisition will be funded mainly through new bank debt, and San Miguel has received bank offers worth as much as $1.85 billion.

A MAN cleans his roof beside stacks of San Miguel beer cases in Manila. San Miguel Corp., the country's largest food and beverage conglomerate on Monday said it has set a Feb. 18 record date for the stock rights offering that it announced last December. SMC said its board authorized the issuance of additional shares equivalent to 10 percent of its outstanding capital stock. AP

Sources said five banks have so far agreed to lend to San Miguel, namely ABN Amro Holding NV., Barclays Plc, HSBC Holdings Plc., Standard Chartered Plc. and Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corp.

San Miguel is also preparing to raise capital from a stock rights offering, which is open to stockholders of record as of Feb. 18.

2-year treasury bond rate falls to 8.87%

By Michelle V. Remo

THE RATE for the two-year Treasury bond fell by over 200 basis points to 8.875 percent yesterday, as high market liquidity and strong fundamentals early in the year boosted appetite for the long-term government securities.

The new rate of 8.875 percent was 212.5 basis points lower than the 11 percent recorded in December. It was also the lowest since the two-year debt paper's auction in October 2003 when the rate reached 8.75 percent.

"I have never seen anything like this ... rates moving this fast," said one bond trader. "It's more sentiment driven than anything else."

Banks scrambled for the two-year T-bond and placed as much as P17.85 billion worth of bids, or more than double the government's intended borrowing of only P8 billion.

The Treasury's auction committee accepted P8 billion worth of bids, raising in full its borrowing program for the week.

Traders said the steep decline of the rate was attributed to the slew of good news, such as the Bureau of Internal Revenue's report that it surpassed its collection target for January, the strengthening of the peso, and the expected entry of huge investments in the mining sector.

The BIR earlier reported that it topped its collection target of P40.8 billion for January. Preliminary figure was pegged at P41 billion.

According to National Treasurer Norma Lasala, the string of positive news came at a time when banks are very liquid, therefore putting more downward pressure on the interest rate. She said a lot of banks usually expand their loan portfolios and position their investments early in the year.

Although interest rate was at a months' low, Lasala said the Bureau of Treasury would keep away temptations to borrow more than what was programmed. For the first quarter, the Treasury was set to borrow P91 billion through the auction of Treasury bills and bonds.

Peso back . . .

From page A1

years, calling for cuts on non-security domestic spending. The lean budget proposal received positive feedback across global markets.

The US dollar also was boosted by comments from US Federal Reserve Chair Alan Greenspan on Friday suggesting that the United States was coming to grips with its huge trade deficit. Some traders interpreted Greenspan's comments ahead of the weekend's Group of Seven meeting as a sign that the dollar may not necessarily have to depreciate to address the US' trade deficit.

The greenback has been on a downtrend since late 2004 on concerns about the widening US trade and budget deficits.

On the other hand, Asian currencies have been rising also on expectation that China may free the yuan's peg to the US dollar this year.

BIR sets lifestyle . . .

From page B1

four times he transacted with his doctor (as reflected by four receipts) cost him P657,980. But based on BIR data, that doctor only paid P788 worth of value-added tax, and P3,254 worth of income tax.

Guillermo said the BIR would use predictive auditing in computing the tax liabilities of doctors. Predictive auditing is the way of estimating one's tax dues using available data, such as an individual's networth.

After conducting a lifestyle check on doctors, she said, the BIR would then zero in on lawyers and accountants.

CURRENCIES

February 8, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.783822	1.000000	54.5560
Japan	Yen	0.007478	0.009541	0.5205
United Kingdom	Pound	1.455871	1.857400	101.3323
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.100494	0.128210	6.9946
Switzerland	Franc	0.64043	0.817060	44.5755
Canada	Dollar	0.624808	0.797130	43.4882
Singapore	Dollar	0.477475	0.609162	33.2334
Australia	Dollar	0.605736	0.772798	42.1608
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.079158	2.652590	144.7147
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.209019	0.266667	14.5483
Brunei	Dollar	0.476024	0.607312	33.1325
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000085	0.000109	0.0059
Thailand	Baht	0.020506	0.026161	1.4272
UAE	Dirham	0.213442	0.272309	14.8561
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.275800	69.6025
Argentina	Peso	0.268755	0.342877	18.7060
Brazil	Real	0.30147	0.384615	20.9831
Denmark	Kroner	0.134375	0.171435	9.3528
India	Rupee	0.018065	0.023047	1.2574
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.206296	0.263193	14.3588
Mexico	New Peso	0.07014	0.089485	4.8819
New Zealand	Dollar	0.552844	0.705318	38.4793
Norway	Kroner	0.119543	0.152513	8.3205
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013204	0.016846	0.9191
South Africa	Rand	0.127118	0.162177	8.8477
Korea	Won	0.000764	0.000975	0.0532
Sweden	Kroner	0.110072	0.140430	7.6613
Syria	Pound	0.0151	0.019264	1.0510
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.024891	0.031756	1.7325

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of February 8, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	30	30.5	30	30.5	239,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	56.5	57.5	56.5	57	2,038,000
China Banking Corp.	580	580	580	580	100
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	46.5	47	46	47	38,800
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.43	0.45	0.43	0.45	430,000
International Exch. Bank	18.25	18.5	18.25	18.25	82,600
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	33	34	33	33.5	3,479,700
Philippine National Bank	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	3,400
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	14.75	14.75	14.5	14.5	11,000
Security Bank Corp.	30.5	31	30.5	31	93,100
Union Bank of the Phil.	29	29.5	28.5	29	49,800
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Filipino Fund Inc.	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	2,000
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	2	2.02	2	2.02	1,274,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	120	120	120	120	1,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1730	1755	1725	1755	2,630
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	16.75	16.75	16.5	16.75	76,600
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.58	1.66	1.58	1.64	18,730,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	945	945	930	940	11,320
Ipeople Inc.	4.2	4.45	4.2	4.45	36,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.037	0.039	0.037	0.039	9,900,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.75	3.75	3.45	3.5	20,326,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1425	1430	1400	1405	327,700
Ivantage Corp.	0.62	0.64	0.62	0.62	1,300,000
Philweb Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.011	0.012	28,300,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	17	17	17	17	10,700
Manila Electric Co. B	26	26.5	26	26.5	451,500
Petron Corp.	3.9	3.95	3.9	3.9	984,000
Salcon Power Corp.	2.12	2.12	2.12	2.12	40,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.46	1.54	1.46	1.54	1,170,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.8	1.86	1.8	1.86	824,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	121,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	7.3	7.3	7.2	7.2	223,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.12	1.12	1.1	1.1	120,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.41	0.45	0.41	0.44	540,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	0.98	1	0.98	1	390,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.6	4.6	4.25	4.3	6,425,000
Republic Cement Corp.	1.48	1.9	1.34	1.76	506,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.45	3.45	3.45	3.45	97,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	32	32	31.5	32	436,200
Jollibee Foods Corp.	26	26.5	25.5	26.5	1,030,600
RFM Corp.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	310,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	170,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57.5	58	57.5	58	119,800
San Miguel Corp. B	78	78.5	77.5	78.5	93,500
Universal Robina Corp.	9.7	9.7	9.7	9.7	10,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	700,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.007	0.007	0.006	0.006	70,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	30,000,000
Ayala Corp.	7.9	8.3	7.9	8.1	12,260,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.65	0.72	0.65	0.7	500,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.9	3.9	3.85	3.85	506,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	11.25	11.25	11.25	11.25	1,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.027	0.027	0.027	0.027	500,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.9	1.92	1.9	1.92	203,000
APC Group Inc.	0.42	0.43	0.4	0.41	5,860,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	92,000,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	20	20	19.5	19.5	12,300
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	150,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.99	1	0.97	0.97	21,090,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.19	0.19	300,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.225	0.235	0.225	0.23	1,700,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.54	0.78	0.54	0.78	74,810,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	5.1	5.1	4.8	4.8	6,089,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.037	0.041	0.037	0.04	52,900,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.22	1.36	1.22	1.36	4,397,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	9.1	9.2	9.1	9.1	1,166,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	45	45	43	43.5	1,893,500
Global Equities Inc.	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	1,400,000
House Of Investments Inc.	1.24	1.26	1.18	1.24	1,690,000
Ionics Inc.	1.72	1.78	1.72	1.74	198,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.05	3.1	3.05	3.1	65,000
Macroasia Corp.	2.24	2.24	2.22	2.22	195,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.64	1.78	1.64	1.78	29,055,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	100,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.51	0.51	0.5	0.5	38,780,000
Polar Property Holdings	2.5	2.6	2.5	2.6	20,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.25	0.27	0.23	0.23	1,410,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87	90,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	90,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	3.2	3.2	2.9	2.9	22,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.15	0.155	0.15	0.15	3,100,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.165	0.185	0.16	0.185	6,010,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.23	0.245	0.23	0.245	1,820,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	2.85	2.85	2.85	2.85	2,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	105,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.9	0.94	0.9	0.94	90,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.08	0.0825	0.08	0.0825	4,700,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	10,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.68	0.76	0.68	0.75	28,230,000
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	13	13	13	13	1,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	1.04	1.1	1.02	1.04	5,127,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.58	0.62	0.58	0.62	1,250,000
Manila Jockey Club	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	6,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.35	0.36	0.35	0.36	1,560,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	16.25	16.25	16.25	16.25	167,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series P	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	200
PLDT 10% Pref Series Cc	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	100
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	9.4	9.9	9.4	9.6	7,623,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.31	0.34	0.31	0.34	160,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.67	0.83	0.67	0.83	1,670,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.34	0.38	0.34	0.37	47,250,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.17	0.19	0.17	0.18	7,540,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.14	0.175	0.14	0.175	2,750,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.48	0.54	0.48	0.54	192,180,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	0.68	0.7	0.68	0.7	60,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.66	1.94	1.66	1.92	26,914,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.21	0.235	0.21	0.225	6,600,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.71	0.72	0.71	0.71	540,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	20,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.165	0.175	0.15	0.16	9,540,000
Primex Corp.	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	100,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2.7	2.75	2.7	2.75	100,000
Phil Realty And Holdings	0.215	0.27	0.215	0.26	14,450,000
SM Development Corp.	1.7	1.74	1.7	1.72	1,255,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8.6	8.7	8.6	8.6	2,140,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.74	0.74	0.74	0.74	20,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	110,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.013	0.013	0.012	0.012	243,800,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	6.6	7	6.4	6.9	991,000
Benguet Corp. A	8	8	7.9	7.9	41,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	4	4	3.8	3.8	25,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.36	0.39	0.35	0.37	26,190,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.43	0.44	0.42	0.42	34,710,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.021	0.022	0.021	0.022	315,200,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.031	0.032	0.029	0.029	636,700,000
Omico Corp.	0.0055	0.0055	0.005	0.005	179,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	1.1	1.16	1.08	1.1	4,107,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.32	1.4	1.28	1.28	25,895,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	51	52	49	49.5	4,007,300
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	230,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	1,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0055	0.0055	0.005	0.005	47,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.007	0.007	0.0065	0.0065	185,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	53,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	200,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.35	0.36	0.35	0.35	180,000
Pacifica	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	1,000,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	10,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.1	0.105	0.0925	0.095	6,200,000

Cocktales

From page B3

technical/marketing expertise for the planned twin condos.

- THE CHIEF American counsel of Imelda Marcos, James Linn, is back in Manila, not only to consult with his famous client but this time to also check out the state of local stem cell research in the new Medical City in Ortigas.

Heard through the grapevine

FORMER Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho has accepted a regional vice chair position from the investment bank Credit Suisse First Boston, with Singapore as his base, where he hopes to rebuild his and his family's nest egg.

Camacho, according to President Arroyo, forsook his P5-million a month job at Deutsche Bank after Edsa II to join the GMA Cabinet for P50,000 a month.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

DISCLOSURES

BENGUET Corp. moved its annual stockholders' meeting from March 16 to April 27 at 3 p.m. at the Sign of the Anvil, 5/F Equitable PCI Bank Tower 1, Makati Ave. corner H.P. dela Costa St., Makati City.

* * *

MEGAWORLD Corp. confirmed that it will undertake a P7-billion mixed-used project near the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3.

* * *

JOLLIBEE Foods Corp. disclosed that for the period, Jan. 31-Feb. 4, a total of 852,076 shares were exercised and fully paid under its stock option plan.

* * *

SAN MIGUEL Corp. principal officer Danilo Navarro sold 3,969 A shares and 3,793 B shares on Feb. 4.

* * *

GRAND Plaza Hotel Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 29. Record date is March 30.

Compiled by DJ Yap, PDI Research

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Oil falls below $46

VIENNA, Austria—Crude oil futures fell more than $1 a barrel to their lowest level in more than a month as traders took cues from Opec officials signaling their willingness to accept lower prices before cutting output.

Warmer weather in the US Northeast also contributed to the decline in prices Monday, but analysts said long-range trends remained bullish, with rising demand from China and India keeping global supplies tight.

Light, sweet crude for March delivery fell $1.20 to settle at $45.28 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It was the lowest closing price since Jan. 5, when Nymex oil futures were $43.39.

Brent crude fell 85 cents to $43.04 on the International Petroleum Exchange.

March heating oil futures dropped 4.36 cents to settle at $1.2306 a gallon on the Nymex.

Victor Shum, an oil analyst at energy consulting agency Purvin & Gertz, predicted that the downward trend would continue, at least over the short term.

"But traders will always look for opportunities, so there is market support for the $45 mark in the short-term," he said.

During the recent World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, several Opec representatives signaled that Opec would not cut output unless prices fell to about $37 a barrel, a source told The Associated Press on condition of anonymity last week.

At its last meeting on Jan. 30, Opec decided not to rein in production, as the price of light, sweet crude oil futures hovered near $47 a barrel. The cartel left open the possibility of an output cut before its mid-March meeting.

The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries agreed in December to cut output by 1 million barrels a day beginning Jan.1 to prevent a glut developing in the second quarter. Opec's official quota stands at 27 million barrels a day.

Analysts said, however, that prices would likely remain firm even if Opec does nothing over the month.

"The underlying trend still seems to be positive," said Alex Scott, senior research analyst at Seven Investment Management in London. "There doesn't seem to be too much letup on demand." *AP*

More US firms raise outlook

NEW YORK—More companies raised profit outlooks than lowered them last month, ending four straight months of predominantly negative forecasts—but only by a razor thin margin, according to Reuters Estimates on Monday.

A big improvement in outlooks in the technology sector led the turnaround, and more tech companies forecast results that exceeded estimates than trailed them for the first time in eight months.

Of 1,132 companies providing a view of their profitability prospects during the month, 269 delivered estimates that exceeded Wall Street expectations. This was four more than those whose forecasts lagged the average prediction of analysts, a weekly report from Reuters Estimates showed.

Nevertheless, it was enough to push the ratio of positive-to-negative pre-announcements above 1 for the first time since August, the report showed. January's final score was 1.02.

Besides technology, other sectors whose positive outlooks exceeded negative forecasts included the non-cyclical consumer goods and services, health-care and utilities.

The laggards included cyclical consumer goods and services, energy and telecommunications services industries.

Companies that raised their outlook in January included Microsoft Corp. and Genzyme Corp.

Microsoft, the world's largest software maker hiked its forecast for the current fiscal year's earnings and revenue.

The jump in positive outlooks provided enough fuel for brokerage Lehman Brothers to bump up its 2004 S&P 500 earnings per share forecast slightly to $67 from $66.50 and its 2005 forecast to $72 from $71.75. *Reuters*

AS SURE AS THE SUN RISES IN THE MORNING

CKP toasts the start of a new business cycle and looks forward to a period of reinvention and growth.

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CONSULTANCY SERVICES

2005: THE YEAR OF THE PHOENIX
"A mythical bird that never dies, the phoenix flies far ahead to the front, always scanning the landscape and distant space. It represents our capacity for vision, for collecting sensory information about our environment and the events unfolding within it. The phoenix, with its great beauty, creates intense excitement and deathless inspiration."
-Feng shui Master Lam Kam Chuen

Singapore, Nikkei marts up

SINGAPORE—Oil prices fell to four-week lows and the dollar hit a fresh one-month high against the yen on Tuesday, boosting Japanese exporters, but worries over corporate earnings halted Australia's record-breaking rally.

Japan's Nikkei index finished 0.08 percent lower at 11,490.43, after rising 1.2 percent on Monday to its highest close in four weeks.

MSCI's broadest index of Asia Pacific shares outside Japan, on the other hand, dropped 0.4 percent by 0615 GMT after hitting a seven-year high on Monday.

Australia's benchmark S&P/ASX 200 fell 0.3 percent, after a series of record highs in recent days, as worries over corporate earnings took their toll.

Boral Ltd., Australia's second-largest building products maker, slid 4.8 percent after it missed market forecasts and warned of more softness ahead in the housing sector.

Commonwealth Bank fell 0.9 percent ahead of its earnings on Wednesday.

Singapore shares rose one percent to their highest close in more than four years as lenders gained on hopes of strong quarterly earnings later this month.

Shares in Hong Kong finished up 0.4 percent at a one-month high on hopes for a traditional New Year rally when the market reopens next week.

Hong Kong and Singapore closed for the Lunar New Year after a half-day session, while Taiwan and South Korea were already closed.

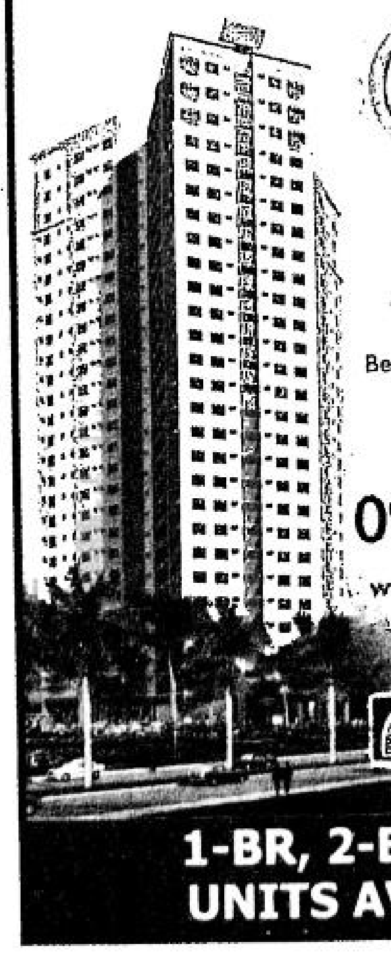
The dollar rose to a one-month high around 105.18 yen from 104.84 in late New York. The euro traded around $1.2761, after falling to a three-month low of $1.2732 on Monday. It fetched 1.2757 in late New York trade.

"The dollar is still supported by Greenspan's comments," said Toshiaki Kimura, chief forex manager at Mitsubishi Trust and Banking. "That, along with the U.S. stance for a tighter fiscal policy, is improving the dollar's outlook."

The big focus for investors will be data on Thursday that is expected to show the US trade gap narrowed to $57 billion in December after two consecutive months of record deficits.

In US equities, the Dow Jones industrial average was virtually flat and the tech-heavy Nasdaq slipped 0.2 percent. *Reuters*

Enjoy the Convenience of Living Beside the Mall



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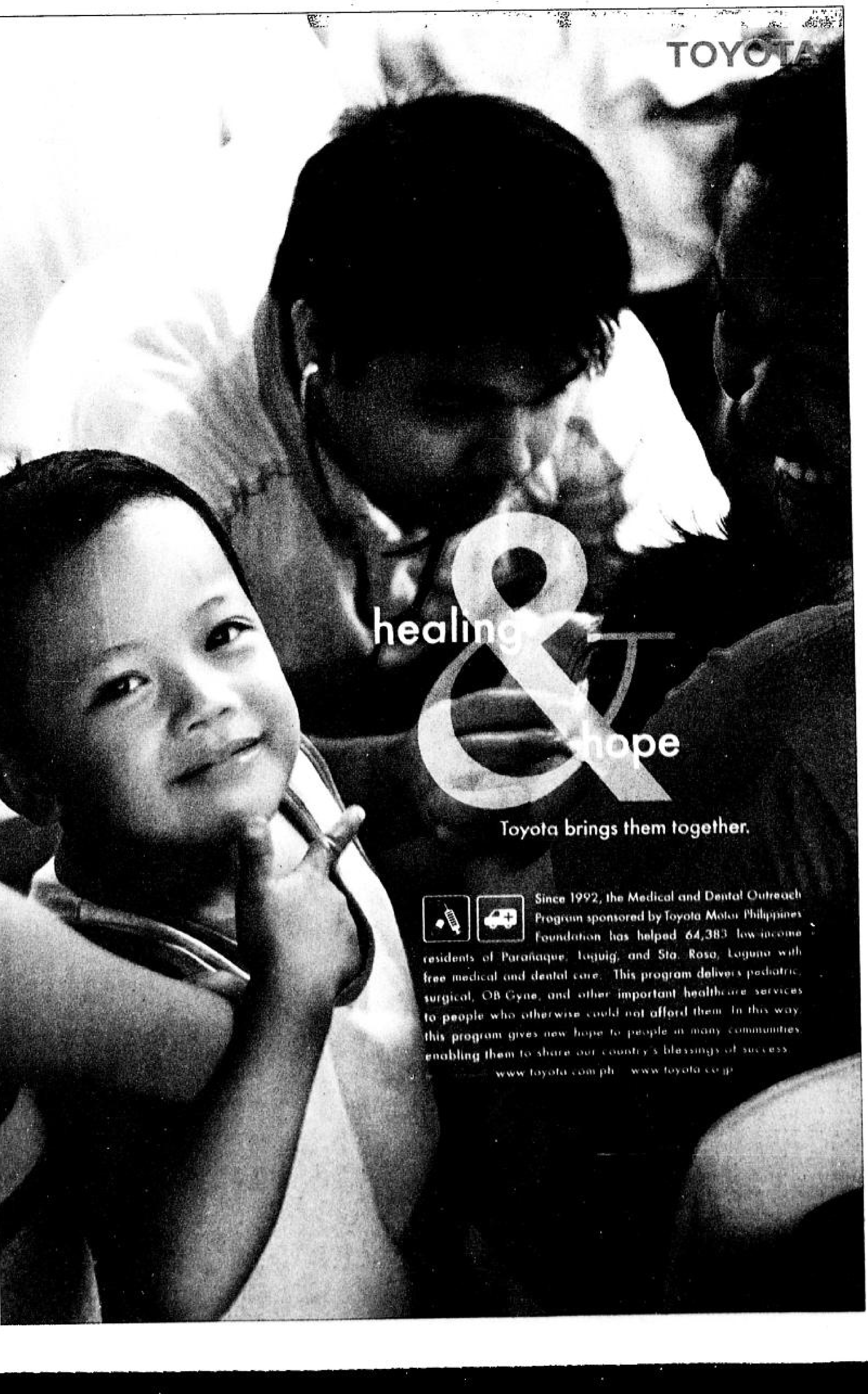

Toyota brings them together.

Since 1992, the Medical and Dental Outreach Program sponsored by Toyota Motor Philippines Foundation has helped 64,383 low-income residents of Parañaque, Taguig, and Sta. Rosa, Laguna with free medical and dental care. This program delivers pediatric, surgical, OB Gyne, and other important healthcare services to people who otherwise could not afford them. In this way, this program gives new hope to people in many communities, enabling them to share our country's blessings of success.
www.toyota.com.ph www.toyota.co.jp

Zone V Camera Club caps 26th year with photo exhibit

ZONE V Camera Club, one of the most active and prestigious camera clubs in the country, is capping its 26th year with a photo exhibit entitled "In Your Face" at the Katha Gallery of Epson Philippines, Digital Exchange at the third floor of Glorietta 3, Ayala Center in Makati.

"In Your Face" is a unique photo exhibit that features abstractions in photographic details. By shooting their subjects at an extreme close-up range, Zone V photographers portrayed everyday, ordinary objects from a different perspective; producing images that border on the abstract. The exhibit's title aptly describes the Zone V photographer practically having to get his or her face into the subject in order to capture the photos in this exhibit.

The resulting images arouse the curiosity of viewers, making them wonder at what they may be seeing. In many instances, the images become recognizable only after some scrutiny-puzzling viewers initially, but ultimately leaving them amused at the end.

Ten members of Zone V Camera Club participated in the exhibit: Mario Babiera, Jay Camus, Tony Esteras, Martin Galan, Tonnette Jacinto, Dennis Magdamo, Noli Ortiz, Kym Sanchez, Nes Santiago and Anton Sheker.

Overall, the exhibit is a showcase of Zone V's innovative approach and creative interpretation in photography over the past 26 years-the same hallmarks that distinguished the excellence of its members, aside from their winning of awards in various international photo competitions.

The exhibit is ongoing at the Katha Gallery of Epson Philippines, located at the Digital Exchange, at the third floor of Glorietta 3, Ayala Center in Makati; until the end of February.

The name of Zone V Camera Club draws its inspiration from the master photographer Ansel Adams' zoning exposure system-an enduring discipline in the basics of photography. Zone V has been actively holding regular photo contests, exhibits, joining various photo-related activities, since its inception in the late '70s.

PASAR TURNS OVER 9 MORE HOUSES TO CFC-GK

Another 9 houses were turned over by Philippine Associated Smelting and Refining (Pasar) Corp to Couples for Christ-Gawad Kalinga beneficiaries. The two houses were donated by the family of Pasar SVP-HRM and plant administration Ricardo Santiago (2nd from right). The simple blessing and turnover rites was dubbed 'GK-Pasar Balay Pamasko'. Pasar is committed to donate a total of 25 houses to CFC-GK. Also shown are Pasar AVP-HRM and comrel J. Paul R. Tan, Isabel Mayor Roberto Fuentes Jr, and DENR Region 8 Director Fermin Weygan.

Ascot trial stopped early; set to change blood pressure treatment

A PANEL of international experts has halted a major clinical trial on hypertension because of significant benefits shown with a new hypertension treatment strategy. Experts believe this could have major implications for the treatment of millions of patients worldwide. The blood pressure arm of the Anglo-Scandinavian Cardiac Outcomes Trial (Ascot) has been stopped early by the Ascot steering committee because of substantial benefits in favor of the amlodipine/perindopril based treatment strategy.

Ascot is a major multi-national trial involving over 19,000 hypertensive patients that compares the effectiveness of two different treatment strategies in reducing cardiovascular events including heart attacks and stroke. The new treatment strategy (the calcium channel blocker, amlodipine, and the angiotensin converting enzyme inhibitor, perindopril) was found to offer significant advantages over the older treatment strategy (the beta blocker, atenolol and the thiazide diuretic, bendroflumethiazide), to such an extent that the trial was stopped early.

"The results of the Ascot trial have been long-awaited", commented professor Peter Sever, Imperial College of London, co-chair of the steering committee. "Stopping a trial early because of important cardiovascular benefits to those patients receiving amlodipine and perindopril is a very exciting outcome, and suggests that we need to rethink our hypertension treatment strategies using these newer, more effective treatments."

The implications for the use of the amlodipine/perindopril combination in terms of reduction in cardiovascular events are huge. The traditional treatment regime of a beta-blocker and diuretic is very widely used,. meaning that potentially millions of patients worldwide could benefit from the positive effects of this new combination of treatments.

These new results show that using amlodipine together with perindopril can produce significant outcome benefits for patients. There is evidence that amlodipine and perindopril can give benefits when used separately, for example. Perindopril was shown to be effective in the Europa trial, which demonstrated a risk reduction of 20 percent in the combination of cardiovascular death, myocardial infarction, and cardiac arrest in a wide range of patients with CHD.

Furthermore, results were similar in patients with or without hypertension, with a significant risk reduction of fatal and non-fatal MI of 23.9 percent and a significant risk reduction in heart failure of 39.2 per cent. It now seems that Ascot will extend these exciting benefits to all patients with hypertension.

Until complete data is available, doctors are advised to maintain their patients on existing medications for hypertension to ensure that their blood pressure remains controlled. If patients are concerned about their current therapy, they are advised to consult their GP. Sudden withdrawal of any treatment regimen could be harmful.

NUTRAFIT, EXOFAT BAR TOUR

Exofat Forte, an all-natural marine fiber that binds dietary fats, and Nutrafit, which aids in increasing your metabolism, thus burning unwanted fats, recently had a bar tour with its celebrity endorser sexy actress Martha Daniels. Exofat Forte and Nutrafit are available at all Mercury Drug outlets and Ellen's Aesthetic Center nationwide. Shown, from left, are Senen Curabo (promotions manager of RDH Entertainment Network) Tess Garlitos (business development manager of Biolink Pharma), Martha Daniels and Leo Versoza Chua (promo coordinator of RDH Entertainment Network).

PIRATES DEN

IMG LEADERSHIP TRAINING FOR CEOS

International Marketing Group (IMG), a financial broker company and an awardee of Philam Plans for being number one in sales early last year, recently held a leadership training in Boracay for four-perfect-day qualifiers among IMG CEOs. Shown seated from left is Solomon Evangelista, WFG VP for international marketing and marketing director. Standing, first row, from 3rd left are Flor Heducos, Jill de las Peñas, Ginalyn Labrado, Jas Sabile, Shirley San Miguel, Aurea Quitoriano, Belle Mirador and Claire Neri. Back row, from 5th left are Rey Labrado, Jun and Carol Avendaño, Dick Quitoriano, Cathy and Bart Borja and Joen de las Peñas, all IMG CEOs. With them are World Financial Group (WFG) leaders who conducted the leadership training.

Immune booster vs diseases

DISEASES of the human body have a common denominator. They attack and penetrate a weakened immune system, which is in itself a victim of the wear and tear of today's modern living.

Like a famous saying, "an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure", families can now look forward to a healthier life everyday in whatever season, thanks to the timely intervention of an all-natural antiviral and antibacterial extract from the tree buds of honeybees, called Nordisk 100% Propolis, a natural product manufactured in Germany made available to the Philippines.

The BFAD-approved 100-percent bee propolis has been recorded by medical science to cure nearly all known deadly diseases of this modern age, including the dreaded cancer! Among the multi-benefits derived from said intake, considered "The World's Best and Trusted Propolis", include the building-up of the human body's resistance to flu, colds, asthma, sinusitis, pharyngitis and other respiratory ailments; promotes stamina; enhances physical and mental vitality; effective in containing tuberculosis; protects the heart while promoting proper blood circulation; prolongs the aging process via inner-rejuvenation and strengthening of the human body's immune system. Thus, if a person's immune system is strong, he or she will not easily be susceptible to various diseases.

A renowned bacteriologist and virologist at the Institute of Microbiology in Europe, professor Michael Likar, whose 10 years of scientific research on hundreds of substances and their effects on microorganisms, concluded in his studies that "propolis is the first substance to inhibit the growth and activity of the microbe proteus-the result of this test with influenza virus "were really astonishing.' The findings were also true to the bacteria known as 'Strapylococus Aureaus," which attacks as an infection on and under the skin; osteomyelitis, periotitis, specifically on infections of the lungs, kidneys and the brain.

In the United States, doctors have been especially impressed with the ability of bee propolis to reduce and fight infection. At a medical seminar in America, bee propolis has been shown to be antibacterial, antiviral and antifungal. The antibacterial properties of propolis even surpassed that of penicillin, as well as other similar drugs, because bacteria and viruses have been unable to build a tolerance to it. In fact, according to the International Beekeeping Technology and Economy Institute, propolis has anti-proteolytic, bactericidal and bacteriostetic effects unequalled among natural substances for its pharmacodynamic action.

Very rich in flavonoid, an important ingredient of propolis, Nordisk 100% Bee Propolis, a natural antibiotic without any serious side effects, is considered the best of its kind in the world, and the right immune booster against deadly diseases. Danish scientist K. Lund Aagaard is credited for such a remarkable scientific discovery and breakthrough, benefiting people of all ages (from a 2-year-old infant to even older persons). Free info/data on this timely nature's product Nordisk 100% Bee Propolis may be obtained through its exclusive distributors in the Philippines-the International Nutrition Products, Inc (Inpi) at 3111 Nagtahan, San Miguel, Manila, with telephone numbers 715-0941 to 43, or fax 715-0946, or e-mail inpi@skyinet.net. It is also available in all Mercury Drug branches and other leading drugstores.

Product FILES

Off-road equipment

HUMMER Philippines Inc, exclusive importers of the Xenon (HiD) lighting system and the now popular E-Bikes, is now offering a solution for weekend off road enthusiasts via the easy to install HPI 4x4 kits.

Imported from the United States, HPI 4x4 Kits provides easy conversion of your 2000 model Nissan Patrol, from a 4x2 to a 4x4 sports utility. Aside from its affordability and reliability, HPI has been quality tested and is the preferred choice of 4x4 enthusiasts in the US and Japan 4x4 markets.

Hummer Philippines offers bolt-on services and after-sales maintenance of the HPI 4x4 system. Hummer Philippines has an ongoing promo that offers free installation of the 4x4 kits. For inquiries, call 713-1998/0917-8307832.

Legal forms in CD expanded

PHIL. LEGAL FORMS

THE EXPANDED version of the first "Philippine Legal Forms in CD", copyright 2004 by lawyer Fernando B. Duque, is now available at selected stores of National Bookstore and Central Lawbooks at P260 per CD.

The first version, which was released late last year, was one of the bookstores' best sellers, and this expanded version, which contains much more document forms and pleadings with verbatim copy of recent legislations as well as Supreme Court resolutions, promises to be a bigger hit. It contains the much-talked-about law on Violence Against Women and their Children, the controversial new legal fees, the new notarial practice law, the Revilla law authorizing illegitimate children to use their father's surname, and more.

Like the first version, this CD is autorun and has the same convenience of just editing the CD format by filling up the blank spaces with the required data and printing as many copies as the user would like to use.

Inquiries may be e-mailed to fb-duque2004@yahoo.com, or at 288-0491. Text 0917-5371937 and ask for a free delivery within Metro Manila.

Clips

Informatics' Call Center Job Fair

INFORMATICS Robinsons Place Manila (IRPM) launches the 4th Philippine Call Center Job Fair 2005 and Career Support Program that aims to train and employ 1,000 qualified call center applicants a day. Guided by its theme, "Right People, Right Skills, Right Jobs," this event runs from Feb. 9 to 11 at Orosa Atrium, Robinsons Place, Manila. Rendezvous' registration is for free and with a first-come-first-serve policy. Earn as much as P12,000 to P15,000 monthly. IRPM offers one of its widest ranges of courses-the Informatics Contact Center Professional Training Program-that would meet the requirements of the global workforce. As a recruitment assistance partner working hand-in-hand with DOLE, DILG and different LGUs in providing jobs to opportunity seekers, Informatics is now accepting applications for the contact center company's manpower needs. For inquiries, call 526-2994 or 302-0091, or log on to www.informaticsrobmanila.com.

Dusit Nikko's blow-out

FEAST with the whole family as Dusit Hotel Nikko welcomes the year of the rooster. Happening at the Café Restaurant until Feb. 10, experience authentic Chinese cuisine. Available for lunch and dinner, these sumptuous recipes are valued at P850++ per person. A complimentary tikoy awaits group diners with a minimum of four persons. While for pastry lovers, take out and crave for best-selling delectable Chinese goodies at the Deli Shop. For reservations, call The Café Restaurant at 867-3333 extension 3346.

AIJC's new president

CUYNO

THE ASIAN Institute of Journalism and Communications (AIJC) has a new president in the person of one of the country's well-known and respect communication experts, Dr. Rogelio V. Cuyno. He is a former Chancellor of the University of the Philippines in Davao. Cuyno takes over the helm of the Institute from an equally renowned and internationally acclaimed communication expert Dr. Florangel Rosario-Braid. Cuyno brings to AIJC his rich experiences in short-term consulting for various organizations like GTZ, IDRC, ADB, Winrock, Isnar, IITA, and Irri. These are in the areas of designing, organizing and managing training courses and review of R&D and training programs.

BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS

Committee on Disposal of Real Properties

INVITATION TO BID

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas invites all interested parties to bid for the following real estate properties:

	Location	TCT No.	Area	Description	Recommended Minimum Bid Price
	METRO MANILA				
	Makati				
1.	Unit No. GA Trafalgar Plaza Condominium Bldg. H.V. dela Costa St., Salcedo Village, Manila	77909	539.68	Commercial Condominium Unit	102,539,200
2.	P. Casal St., Quiapo Dist. Muntinlupa	244914	5,977.70	Comm'l w/ various imp.	97,174,000
3.	Lot 49, Blk. 1 Mangga St., Mutual Homes, AFP-RSBS Housing Project, Brgy. Putatan, Parañaque, Moonwalk Village	12226	170	Res'l w/ 238 sq.m. 2-stry imp.	2,107,000
4.	Lot 13, Blk. 1	157552	307	Residential Lot 1/	1,289.400
5.	Lot 12, Blk. 1	157551	293	Residential Lot 1/	1,230,600
6.	Lot 11, Blk. 1 Quezon City	157550	278	Residential Lot 1/	1,167,600
	One Burgundy Place Condo, Katipunan Ave.				
7.	Unit No. H (9th Floor)	N-35450	62.07	Residential Condominium Unit 2/	2,793,150
8.	Unit No. G (9th Floor) Valenzuela City	N-35451	62.70	Residential Condominium Unit 2/	2,821,500
9.	89 Gen. T. de Leon Street, Brgy. Karuhatan	V-71850 to 51	527	Res'l w/ 3-door apt & 3 res'l bldgs.	3,994,500
	LUZON				
	Batangas				
11.	Lot 3 Blk 1 Catalina Subd., Brgy. Sico, Lipa City	145308	442	Residential Lot	1,547,000
12.	Lot 21-B Mabini Homes, Brgy. 7, Pob. Lipa City	145309	63	Res'l w/ 75 sq.m. 2-stry imp.	584,000
13.	Lot 21-C Mabini Homes, Brgy. 7, Lipa City	145310	61	Res'l w/ 75 sq.m. 2-stry imp.	578,000
14.	Lot 13 Blk 48 Longspur St., Canyon Woods, Laurel	104423	400	Residential Lot	2,800,000
	Bocaue, Bulacan 3/				
15.	MacArthur Highway (6 lots)	50306 to 08 427085 to 86	17,737	Ind'/Res'l/Com'l Lot	74,495,400
	Dagupan City				
21.	Lot 8235-B, Maligaya St., Bonuan	78473	616	Residential Lot	308,000
22.	Lot 8236-B Maligaya St., Bonuan	78474	1,435	Residential Lot	717,500
23.	Lot 8235-A Maligaya St., Bonuan	78482	615	Residential Lot	307,500
24.	Lot 3 Blk 13 Eagle Crest Villas, Bonuan	78469	180	Residential Lot	306,000
25.	Lot 4477-D Tapuac District	78471	1,013	Residential Lot	2,532,000
26.	Lot 2926-A-2-B-1 Arellano St., Brgy. Pantal	78476	1,415	Residential/Commercial Lot	5,660,000
27.	Lot 7557-B-2 Bonuan & Careenan Dist.	78477	5,649	Res'l w/ 85 sq.m. imp & 60 sq.m. whse	3,104,000
28.	Lot 3813-C-4 & 5, Bonuan & Careenan Dist.	78470 & 72	300	Res'l w/ 197 sq.m. imp.	1,080,000
30.	Camia cor. Gardenia Sts., Dior Village, Pantal Dist.	78475	374	Residential w/ imp	1,496,000
31.	Lot No. 6610-B, Caranglaan	78553	250	Residential Lot	250,000
32.	Lot 8, Caranglaan	78554	308	Res'l w/ 120 sq.m. res'l imp	668,000
33.	Lot 40-F-3 Poblacion	78487	252.60	Com'l w/ 452 sq.m. 3-stry bldg & whse	8,085,000
34.	Lot 259-A & E, Poblacion	78484 & 88	362	Com'l w/ 524 sq.m. com'l bldg.	10,170,000
36.	Lot 9052-A and 9052-B, Poblacion	78485 & 86	804	Res'l w/ apartment bldgs.	5,904,000
38.	Lot 4-D Lucao District	78479	410	Residential Lot	267,000
39.	Lot 8132-A Bonuan District	78483	1,442	Residential Lot	260,000
40.	Lot 7894 Bonuan District	78481	2,572	Residential Lot	386,000
41.	Lot 8279, Bonuan	78480	3,485	Res'l w/ 90 sq.m. imp	843,000
42.	Lot 2652-E to G, Bolosan	78556 to 60	1,596	Res'l w/ imprvments	1,438,000
45.	Lot 3 Arzadon Compound, Mayombo	78478	1,135	Residential Lot 4/	3,234,000
46.	Lot 2025 Salisay District	78489	1,266	Res'l w/ 98 sq.m. 2-stry imp	1,076,000
	Calamba Laguna				
47.	Lot 2137, Bo. Makiling	529112	7,101	Industrial/Residential Lot	4,970,700
48.	Lot 2133, Bo. Makiling	529113	15,082	Industrial/Residential Lot	10,557,400
49.	Lot 2, Bo. Makiling	529114	21,520	Industrial/Residential Lot	15,064,000
50.	Lot 2159, Bo. Makiling	529115	19,652	Industrial/Residential Lot	11,791,200
51.	Lot 2158-B, Bo. Makiling	529115	23,009	Industrial/Residential Lot	11,504,500
52.	Lots 2, 3 & 4 Blk 3, Farconville Subd., Parian	529117 to 19	587	Res'l w/ 4-door apt.	1,687,700
55.	Lot 1-B-2 Barangay Real	529129	12,605	Industrial Lot	18,908,000
56.	Lot 1 Blk 1 National Road, Brgy. Parian	564932	253	Com'l w/ 2-stry 250 sq.m. bank br.	6,295,000
	La Union				
57.	Lot 2-A-2-C-5-2 to 4 Bacuit Norte, Bauang	3678 to 80	1,200	Res'l w/ imprvments	3,010,000
	Lucena				
60.	L10, B1, St. Joseph St., St. Michael Subd.	T-111491	167	Residential Lot	233,800
61.	Lot 3237-D-1, Gulang-gulang	T-111492	1,129	Res'l w/ 301 sq.m. imp	4,105,300
62.	Lot 1635 Barangay Domoit 5/	T-111493	15,095	Agro. Industrial or Industrial Lot	4,985,029
63.	Lots 12 & 13, B6 Moscow Street, Enverga Village	T-111494 to 95	360	Res'l w/ 178 sq.m. res'l imp	1,175,000
	Quezon				
65.	Lots 5248 and 5277 G National Road, Sariaya 6/	T-411104 to 05	23,480	Residential/Commercial Lot	5,703,372
67.	Lot 485-G National Road, Isabang, Tayabas 7/	T-411106	785	Residential/Commercial Lot	1,652,253
68.	Lot 485-H National Road, Isabang, Tayabas 7/	T-411107	593	Residential/Commercial Lot	1,246,547
	Tarlac				
69.	Sampaguita St., Blossom Ville Subd., Matatalaib	373470	408	Residential w/ various imp.	1,590,400
70.	L3 B29 Honey Suckle Drive, "Hacienda Paz" Las Piñas Subd. Brgy. San Miguel, Luisita	379924	498	Residential Lot	996,000
71.	Lot 1 Brgy. Green Village, Concepcion	378767	3,000	Res'l/Com'l with various imp	11,238,000
	VISAYAS				
	Bacolod				
72.	L2 B10 Onyx cor. Pearl St., City Heights Subd. Taculing	288315	223	Residential Lot	335,000
73.	Salvacion cor. Teresa Sts., Villa Valderama Subd.	288316 to 19	2,099	Res'l/Coml w/ various imp.	7,754,500
	MINDANAO				
	Davao del Norte				
77.	Lot 4537-S-10 Jumawan Subd., Visayan Vill., Tagum	T-190394	600	Residential Lot	240,000
78.	Lot 4537-S-9 Jumawan Subd., Visayan Vill., Tagum	T-190385	600	Residential Lot	240,000
79.	Quezon Boulevard, Poblacion, Panabo City	194442	1,284	Com'l w/ 952 sq.m. theater	6,203,000
	Bermudez Subdivision, Brgy. Apokon				
80.	Lot 23, Blk 15 Kalantas Street	T-185411	100	Res'l w/ 27 sq.m. imp.	152,000
81.	Lot 27, Blk. 16 Mahogany St.	T-190390	125	Res'l w/ 36 sq.m. imp.	198,500
82.	Lot 5, Blk. 16 Mahogany St.	T-190392	120	Res'l w/ 36 sq.m. imp.	196,000
83.	Lot 7, Blk. 20, Narra St.	T-190389	100	Res'l w/ 36 sq.m. imp.	186,000
84.	Lot 13, Blk. 23 Narra St.	T-190386	94	Res'l w/ 27 sq.m. imp.	149,000
85.	Lot 50, Blk. 23 Sasalit St.	T-185406	90	Res'l w/ 27 sq.m. imp.	147,000
86.	Lot 84, Blk. 23 Mahogany Street	T-185408	120	Res'l w/ 36 sq.m. imp.	196,000
87.	Lot 9, Blk. 24, Salisi Street	T-190387	100	Res'l w/ 36 sq.m. imp.	186,000
88.	Lot 3, Blk. 26, Neem St.	T-190391	126	Res'l w/ 36 sq.m. imp.	199,000
89.	Lot 22, Blk. 26, Molave Street	T-185407	120	Res'l w/ 36 sq.m. imp.	196,000
90.	Lot 12, Blk. 26, Molave Street	T-185405	120	Res'l w/ 36 sq.m. imp.	196,000
91.	Lot 12, Blk. 28, Nato Street	T-185410	85	Res'l w/ 27 sq.m. imp.	150,500
92.	Lot 26, Blk. 29, Narek Street	T-190388	110	Res'l w/ 36 sq.m. imp.	191,000
93.	Lot 29, Blk. 29, Nagimit Street	T-190393	110	Res'l w/ 36 sq.m. imp.	191,000
94.	Lot 31, Blk. 29, Nagimit Street	T-185409	110	Res'l w/ 36 sq.m. imp.	191,000
	General Santos City				
95.	Lot 24, Blk. 2, Carmela Homes, Brgy. Katanggawan	101389	201	Residential Lot	60,300
96.	Lot 26, Blk. 2, Carmela Homes, Brgy. Katanggawan	101390	201	Residential Lot	60,300

1/ with illegal settlers
2/ Excluding Parking Slot
3/ Standing on the land are residential, rice mill, motorpool, and other improvements without value
4/ Inclusive of 57 sq.m. legal easement – Tulao River
5/ Inclusive of 210 sq.m. area affected by Brgy. Road and 642.06 sq.m. legal easement along Eluding River, and is partly encroached by a public school
6/ Inclusive of 666.51 sq.m. legal easement along Lunasan Creek
7/ Inclusive of legal easement along creek

Deadline for submission of duly accomplished bid forms enclosed in sealed envelopes shall be on February 23, 2005, 10:00 AM, at Rm. 313, Five-Storey Bldg., BSP Complex A, Mabini St., Malate, Manila. All bids will be opened immediately after the deadline for submission of bids at Rm. MR3A, Five-Storey Bldg., BSP Complex.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. The Buyer is deemed to have inspected the property.
2. The sale of the properties shall be "As is, Where is" and the winning bidder shall undertake the responsibility to acquire and maintain peaceful possession and enjoyment of the property without seeking the assistance of the BSP.
3. The BSP reserves the right to withdraw any or all of the properties offered for sale at any time before the deadline for submission of offers, and to reject any or all bids to waive any infirmity found therein, or to accept such offers as will be considered advantageous to the BSP.
4. The Committee will immediately start accepting offers for negotiation, in the event of a failed bidding, and will continue to accept offers through the Asset Management Department. However, the Committee may at its discretion, elect to conclude the negotiation immediately after failure of bidding whenever there is a highest complying offeror ascertained.
5. Offerors at the Public Bidding must tender a BID BOND equivalent to 10% of the minimum bid price and offerors under the negotiated sale basis must submit an EARNEST MONEY equivalent to 10% of the asking price either in CASH or CASHIER's/MANAGER's CHECK payable to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas which shall form part of the consideration once the offer is approved by the Monetary Board.
6. ALL OFFERS RECEIVED DURING THE AUCTION ARE SUBJECT TO FINAL APPROVAL OF THE MONETARY BOARD.

Complete description of the properties, rules and regulations on the bidding procedures and the prescribed bid forms are available for a minimal fee of P50.00 at the Asset Management Department, Rm. 313, Five-Storey Bldg., through the following:

	Direct Line	Trunk Line: 524-70-11
Ms. Louella Veloro	523-34-86	loc. 2857
Ms. Geraldine Tarlengco	404-21-14	loc. 2835
Ms. Mae Ramos	523-34-86	loc. 2857

(Sgd.) **MELPIN A. GONZAGA**
Committee Chairman

(PDI–February 9, 2005)

Secretaries Week

IN CELEBRATION of Secretaries Week, the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines and American Management Association in partnership with American Chamber brings to you "Partnering With Your Boss: Strategic Skills for Administrative Professionals" on Feb. 14-15, at The Peninsula Manila. Attend this seminar and master techniques for effective goal setting, prioritizing, planning, decision making, relationship building and listening. Learn how to communicate confidently and assertively... and develop and use power and authority. For more information, call 8451324 or 7596680 or email to jrunez@imperialconsulting.com.ph or visit our website at www.imperialconsulting.com.ph

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LB (Land Bank) Realty Development Corporation

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID

All contractors, registered and/or classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) for Buildings and Industrial Plant and preferably with experience in the construction of bank building or projects of identical scope of works and technology, are invited to apply for pre-qualification and to submit their bids for the renovation/construction of the following LBP BRANCH OFFICES.

Branch Office	Location	Category
Guihulngan Branch	Negros Oriental	Medium
Baguio Branch	Benguet	Small

Pre-qualification requirements may be obtained from the Purchasing Unit of the Land Bank Realty Development Corporation at 30th Flr. LBP Plaza, 1598 M.H. del Pilar corner J. Quintos Sts., Malate, Manila. LBRDC reserves the right to change the cost estimates, the date of issuance of bid documents, pre-bid conference, submission of bids and date of bidding. Due notice of changes shall however be communicated by LBRDC to invited bidders.

LBRDC likewise reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect or formality, assume no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expense or loss that they may incur in the preparation of their bid and to accept the bid most advantageous to the company.

For further details, please call **Eng'r. Jaime S. Mendoza/Allan G. Redondo/Aries L. Mendoza** at 405-7169/405-7402/405-7135.

(Sgd.) CHAIRMAN
Committee on Bids and Awards

(PDI - Feb. 9, 2005)

NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION

Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION TO BID FOR THE SALE OF UNSERVICEABLE ITEMS

"AS IS, WHERE IS" BASIS

DATE OF BIDDING : **Feb. 24, 2005, 2:00 PM, Solarium Hall, Building-1 Ground Floor NPC-Head Office, Agham Road corner Quezon Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City.**

The National Power Corporation will conduct public bidding for the sale of the following:

Item	Description and Location	Minimum Bid Price
	SCHEDULE-III	
-1-	One (1) lot: Unserviceable Items consisting of Eleven (11) units Junk Motor Vehicles, One (1) unit cannibalized Fork-Lift, One (1) unit Fuel Oil Tank for dismantling, One (1) Over-Head Crane Assembly inside Power House for dismantling and One (1) Over-Head Crane Assembly outside Power House for dismantling. Located at the defunct Amlan Diesel Power Plant within the TRANSCO S/S compound in Amlan, Negros Oriental	P 733,600.00 per lot

ALL BIDS MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE FOLLOWING:

1. PROPOSAL BOND DEPOSIT IN THE FORM OF CASH OR MANAGERS'/CASHIERS' CHECK EQUIVALENT TO TEN PERCENT (10%) OF THE TOTAL BID PRICE.
2. LATEST INCOME TAX RETURN (2003 or 2004) ORIGINAL OR CERTIFIED XEROX COPY FOR THE BIDDER OR AN AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE COMPANY.

All interested parties who wish to secure bid forms for this public bidding must present a valid Tax Identification Card or Income Tax Return.

Interested parties who wish to participate in the public bidding may secure the bid form at P500.00/schedule from Mr. S.V. Lomuntad, Jr. / Mr. Al Plata at MMD, Ground Floor, Bldg.-1, NPC Head Office, corner Agham Road and Quezon Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City or call telephone no. 924-5384. **Deadline for issuance of the bid forms is until 4:30 PM, February 23, 2005.**

For the Materials Management Department
(Sgd.) **FELIX B. TACATA, JR.**
OIC, MMD

(PDI – February 7, 8 & 9, 2005)

NOTICE

is hereby given that

LEGACY FOR LIFE PHILIPPINES, INC.

OR

LEGACY SHOES, BAGS AND GENERAL MERCHANDISE, INC.

ARE **NOT** IN ANYWAY CONNECTED WITH

LEGACY CONSOLIDATED PLANS, INC.

OR ANY OF ITS MEMBER COMPANIES AND AFFILIATES UNDER THE LEGACY GROUP OF COMPANIES. IN AN ORDER FROM THE

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

DATED SEPTEMBER 8, 2004
RE: SEC CASE NO. 08-04-29,
LEGACY FOR LIFE PHILIPPINES, INC. WAS DIRECTED TO AMEND ITS ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION BY CHANGING ITS CORPORATE NAME.

(PDI – FEBRUARY 9, 2005)

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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that the estate of the late ZENON DEGUIA settled by their heirs through an extrajudicial partion acknowledged before Notary Public Mary Elizabeth Bayhon City of Makati as per Doc. No. 310 on Page 100, Book IV Series of 2004.
(PDI - Feb. 9, 16 & 23, 2005)

NOTICE OF LOSS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF THE THE LOSS OF PLATE # TWN-848 OWNED BY VICTOR IANO TRUCKING
PDI - 1/26, 2/2, & 9, 2005

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TANGGAPAN NG PANGULO
(Office of the President)
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PHILIPPINE CHARITY SWEEPSTAKES OFFICE
PCSO Complex, E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave., Q.C., Philippines P.O. Box 141

OFFICE OF THE BAC-ITR

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO RE-BID APPROVED BUDGET CONTRACT: Php 13,600,000.00

1. The Government of the Philippines through the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) invites interested suppliers/contractors classified by, and registered with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) with License Category C (Electrical) or higher to re-bid for the Installation/Delivery of Module I, PCSO Information Technology Network Infrastructure (ITNI) Project.
2. The schedule of activities is as follows:

2.1 Issuance of Eligibility Forms	Feb. 9-16, 2005	BAC Room, Annex II Bldg.
2.2 Submission of Eligibility Requirements	Until 5:00 P.M. of Feb. 18, 2005	BAC Room, Annex II Bldg.
2.3 Notice of Eligible/Ineligible Bidders	Mar. 4, 2005	
2.4 Issuance of Bid Documents to Eligible Bidders	Mar. 4 - 17, 2005	BAC Room, Annex II Bldg.
2.5 Pre-Bid Conference	Mar. 22, 2005, 10 A.M.	Exec. Lounge, 4/F Main Bldg.
2.6 Submission of Bid Documents	On or before 10:00 A.M. of Apr. 4, 2005	Exec. Lounge, 4/F Main Bldg.
2.7 Opening of Bids	Apr. 4, 2005, 10:30 A.M.	Exec. Lounge, 4/F Main Bldg

3. The Eligibility Forms may be secured from the office stated above upon payment of a non-refundable amount of five hundred pesos (P500.00).
4. Instruction to Bidders/Terms of Reference/Financial Bid Forms, are available from March 4-17, 2005 and shall be issued to prospective bidders after payment of a non-refundable fee of four thousand five hundred pesos (Php 4,500.00).
5. Every Prospective Bidder must, among the qualifications set forth by RA 9184 and its IRR, be a Systems Integrator certified by an Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) of end-to-end premises cabling solution and with at least five (5) years experience in the same industry, to install/ deliver all the following components:
   - 5.1 Access Raised Floor System for Server Room
   - 5.2 Technical Furniture and Partitions for MIS Data Center
   - 5.3 Structured Cabling and Components, Rack Enclosure System, and Cabling Containment for MIS Data Center
   - 5.4 Security Access Control System for Server Room and MIS Office Entrance
   - 5.5 Dehumidifier for Server Room
   - 5.6 Fire Suppression System for Server Room
   - 5.7 Electrical System for MIS Data Center
   - 5.8 Network Application Servers and Workstations and UPS for MIS Data Center.
6. Submission and Opening of Bids: Two (2) sealed envelopes with name and address of the bidders on the left band margin addressed to the Chairman of the PCSO BAC-ITR marked with **"Do not open until April 4, 2005."**
   - 6.1 The sealed envelopes shall be submitted to the BAC Secretariat on or before 10:00 a.m. of April 4, 2005
   - 6.2 Opening of Bids shall be on April 4, 2005 at 10:30 a.m.
7. Post-Qualification: Presentation of the original documents and actual unit/s are required for verification purposes.
8. Applicable Rules and Regulations:
   - 8.1 Republic Act 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) pertaining to evaluation of bids, post-qualification and award of contract shall govern the bid activities.
   - 8.2 The PCSO reserves the right to reject any or all bids and/or part thereof declare a failure of bidding or not to award the contract and to accept the offer most advantageous to the government.
   - 8.3 The PCSO assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidder/s for any expense or loss incurred in the preparation and submission of the eligibility requirements and bid, and it does not guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) ROSARIO C. URIARTE
General Manager

(PDI – February 9 & 14, 2005)

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ESTELITA NACINO CASTRO

Peacefully joined our Creator
on February 2, 2005 at the age of 69.

Her husband, **DR. RONALDO M. CASTRO**; children **Marly & Bong, Warren & Elaine, Ringo, Chona, Tyrone & Criselda**; grandchildren **Heart, Miguel** and **A.R.**; sister **CAROLINA & JOE TANGPUZ**; brothers **ANGEL (†), ATTY. JELLY P. NACINO & GENE ROXAS**; nephews and nieces, and all her relatives request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the ancestral house in Brgy. 13 San Nicolas, Ilocos Norte. Interment will be on Saturday, Feb. 12, 2005, at 3:00 p.m.

SR. JULIETA DEL CONSUELO LEDESMA, SSJ

Died in the Grace of the Lord
on Sunday, February 6, 2005 at the age of 89.

Her body lies in state at the school chapel of St. Theresita's Academy in Silay City, Negros Occidental. The Funeral Mass will be held on Wednesday, February 9, 2005, at 8:00 in the morning at San Diego Pro-Cathedral Parish, Silay City.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the St. Theresita's Academy of Silay City Educational Foundation, Inc. (STACEFI) will be appreciated.

SK BENJAMIN M. TIBAYAN

of Pasay City and BF Homes, Parañaque City

Peacefully joined his Creator on February 06, 2005 at the age of 80.

His bereaved wife **Naty**, only child **Fe** and **Phil**; grandchildren: **Fritz** and **Bing**, **Jumboy**, **Patty**, great grandchildren **Fonzie** and **Luis**, relatives and friends request, the pious readers to pray for his eternal happiness in heaven.

His body lies in state at Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, Sucat Road, Parañaque City.

Interment will be at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat Road, Parañaque City on February 10, 2005, Thursday, after the 2:00 p.m. Mass.

> **"...absent from the body to be present with the Lord."**
> 2 Corinthians 5:8

PACITA (PAT) MAPUA OSIAS

November 16, 1925 – February 6, 2005

Widow of General Victor Manuel Osias
AFP Chief Staff 1967 – PMA Class '40

Pat's only son, **CAPT. MANUEL M. OSIAS** & his wife **AUDINA SILVERIO**; grandsons **JULIO VICTOR (JV)** & **FRANCIS MIGUEL (MIEKI)**, her only living brother Brigadier General (Ret.) **ANGEL L. MAPUA** & his wife **BENITA KABAYAO**; together with all her relatives sorrowfully announce the death of **Pat**.

Her cremains now lie at Capilla Dela Virgen, Sanctuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City.

Pat's cremains will be buried after the graveside Funeral Mass at 10:30 o'clock A.M. on Saturday, 12 February 2005, at the same site joining her beloved husband, General Osias, at AFP Chief of Staff's Row, Libingan ng mga Bayani, Fort Bonifacio, Makati City.

MANUEL GARCIA GOOCO

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on February 7, 2005 at the age of 74.

His bereaved wife **CRISANTA UY GOOCO**; children: **GLENN & SIENNA, ANNA & DENNIS, GILBERT, GERALD, AILEEN & JOJO**; grandchildren: **MET & NICOLE**; other relatives and friends request the readers to join them in praying for his eternal happiness in heaven.

His body lies in state at the San Dionisio Chapel, Parañaque City.

Interment will be on February 12, 2005, at the Parañaque Catholic Cemetery after the celebration of the 2:00 PM Holy Mass at the St. Andrew's Cathedral, La Huerta, Parañaque City.

CLASSIFIEDS

NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION

Notice is hereby given that **Futsu International Corporation**, a corporation duly organized and existing under the law of the Republic of the Philippines with principal office and place of business at Ngilay Road, Tambler, General Santos City.

By virtue of a resolution duly approved unanimously by its Board of Director, January 13, 2005 decided to dissolve its term of existence on February 28, 2005.

Any person, natural or juridical who may have money, claims or otherwise against said corporation may present or file the same with the secretary of the corporation within the three (3) weeks from the date of the publication.

Let this notice be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the whole country for the three (3) consecutive weeks prior to its dissolution.

(Sgd.) **Lin-Chen, Jen-Shiu**
President

(PDI-Feb.9, 15 & 21, 2005)

FOREST HILLS
GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB

NOTICE OF AUCTION SALE

Notice is hereby given to all interested parties that shares of stock of FOREST HILLS GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB, INC. are available for sale at the auction to be held on 23 February 2005, 10 o'clock a.m., at the Clubhouse. The minimum bid price shall be as follow:

Class "A" shares	Php250,000.00
Class "B" shares	Php250,000.00
Class "C" shares	Php350,000.00

(Sgd.) **ROMEO G. CARLOS**
Corporate Secretary

(PDI-Feb 9, 2005)

Pira's Board of Trustees

THE PHILIPPINE Insurers and Reinsurers Association (Pira), the umbrella association of all non-life insurance and reinsurance companies in the Philippines, recently held its election of the Board of Trustees. Elected for 2005 are:

Chairman - Herminia S. Jacinto (President, Universal-Malayan Re); Deputy Chairman - Manuel C. Quijano (Gen. Manager, ACE-Insurance Co. of North America); Treasurer - Ramon Y. Dimacali (President, Federal Phoenix Insurance Co.); Corporate Secretary - Atty. Honorio J. Ramajo (President, Mercantile Insurance Co.); Trustee - Jose B. Zuñiga (President, PNB General Insurers Co.); Redentor Magnt (SVP, BPI/MS Insurance Co.); David P. Mercado, Jr. (President, Utility Insurance Co.); Virgilio V. Cruz (President, PhilGen Insurance Co.); Michael F. Rellosa (President, Fortune Guarantee). The Pira represents the unified association of non-life insurers which used to be the Insurance and Surety Association of the Philippines (Isap) and the Philippine General Insurers Association (PGIA).

NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION
Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION TO BID FOR THE SALE OF UNSERVICEABLE ITEMS

"AS IS, WHERE IS" BASIS

DATE OF BIDDING : **February 24, 2005**, 2:00 PM, Solarium Hall, Building-1, Ground Floor NPC-Head Office, Agham Road corner Quezon Ave., Diliman, Quezon City.

The National Power Corporation will conduct public bidding for the sale of the following items:

ITEM	DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION	MIN. BID PRICE
	Schedule-I	
-1-	One (1) Lot: Used "PCB-Free" Transformer Oil and Oil Circuit Breakers, Twelve (12) sets. Located at TRANSCO-Mexico Substation, Jose Matulid, Mexico, Pampanga. Limited only to **DENR accredited Transporter and/ or Waste-Treater.**	P 4,028,430.00 per lot
-2-	Two-Year Contract of Sale of Old Records and Used Papers at NPC Head Office. Bond required is P5,000.00	P 5.00 per kg.
-3-	Two-Year Contract of Sale for Used Continuous Forms at NPC Head Office. Bond required is P2,000.00	P 9.27 per kg.
	Schedule-II	
-1-	One (1) Lot: Unserviceable, Used and Junk Substation Equipment (OCB, GCB, CT, PT, DS); General Plant Equipment and Parts, Assorted Scrap Metals and Power Cables. Located at Bataan TPP, Brgy. Luz, Limay Town, Bataan Province.	P 1,219,590.00 per lot
-2-	One (1) Lot: Obsolete Stator Coils, various sizes and Expired / Obsolete Parts, Chemicals, Spares and Materials. Located at Malaya TPP (KEPHILCO), Pililla Town, Rizal Province.	P 216,000.00 per lot

ALL BIDS MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE FOLLOWING:

1. PROPOSAL BOND DEPOSIT IN THE FORM OF CASH OR MANAGER'S/ CASHIERS' CHECK EQUIVALENT TO TEN PERCENT (10%) OF THE TOTAL BID PRICE.
2. LATEST INCOME TAX RETURN (2003 or 2004) ORIGINAL OR CERTIFIED XEROX COPY FOR THE BIDDER OR AN AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE COMPANY.
3. BIDDERS FOR ITEM-1 SCHEDULE I MUST PRESENT EMB-DENR ACCREDITATION AS HAZ-WASTE TRANSPORTER AND/OR TREATER (ORIGINAL MUST BE PRESENTED).

All interested parties who wish to secure bid forms for this public bidding must present a valid Tax Identification Card or Income Tax Return.

Interested parties who wish to participate in the public bidding may secure the bid form at P500.00 / Schedule from Mr. S.V. Lomuntad, Jr. / Mr. Al Plata at MMD, Ground floor, Bldg.-1, NPC Head Office, Corner Agham Road and Quezon Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City or call telephone no. 924-5384. Deadline for issuance of the bid forms is until 4:30 PM, February 23, 2005.

For the Materials Management Department
(Sgd.) **FELIX B. TACATA, JR.**
OIC, MMD

(PDI – February 9, 10 & 11, 2005)

The Face of Interaction

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Minimum of 4 years experience in industrial selling.
Knowledge and experience in selling to construction and rental companies will be a definite advantage.

Knowledge / Educational requirements
Degree in Engineering, preferably with PRC license.
Excellent verbal and written communication skills.
Computer literate and a good presentation skills.

Personality requirements
High degree of customer relations skills and good manpower management is desirable.
At least 28 years of age.
Has an excellent ability to lead and to coach.
Must be willing to travel within short notice.

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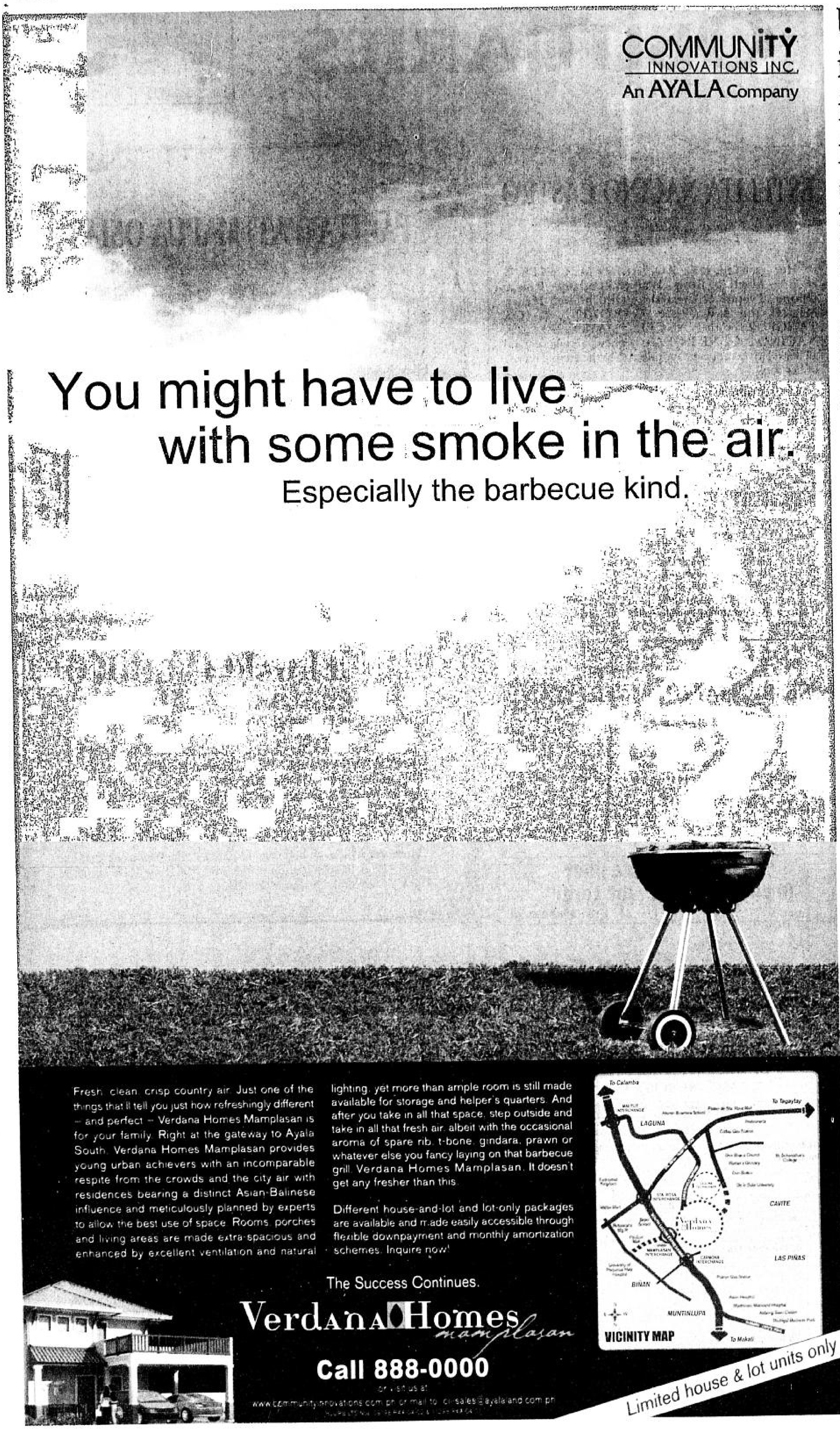
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US firm seen investing $2B in coal-to-gas facility in RP

By Abigail L. Ho

THE PHILIPPINES may be the next regional hub for coal-derived fuel as a United States-based firm, Headwaters Inc., prepares to infuse $2.2 billion into a coal conversion facility in the country.

This facility will have a capacity of 50,000 barrels a day.

The Department of Energy yesterday signed a memorandum of understanding with the company, paving the way for the conduct of a feasibility study on the use of the country's indigenous coal for conversion into "ultra-clean" gasoline or diesel.

Under the MOU, a pilot plant to be fed 25 kilograms of coal per day would be established. This will determine the suitability of local coal to Headwater's coal-into-fuel technology.

If found feasible, a commercial arrangement between the DOE and Headwaters would be drafted. For commercial operations, a coal conversion plant capable of producing 50,000-70,000 barrels of fuel per day would be constructed.

This facility will be as big as the plant Headwaters is currently putting up in China, in partnership with the Shenhua Group, China'a largest coal company.

Energy Undersecretary and MOU signatory Peter Anthony Abaya said the Philippine plant, if a commercial arrangement would be forged with Headwaters, should be operational by the first quarter of 2009.

The plant, with its ultra-clean gasoline and diesel, will not only help ease the country's dependence on imported fuel but also help drive down pump prices.

Abaya said if the fuel produced using Headwater's coal conversion technology could be sold at around 10-20 percent lower than existing prices, the savings that could be generated from it would be tremendous.

Also, with the plant seen to replace at least 50,000 barrels of the 350,000 barrels of oil that the country uses daily, he said huge dollar savings would be realized.

Headwaters' entry will allow the full utilization of coal being produced in the country's mines, particularly in Semirara.

MNTC taking over NLEX operations

By Clarissa S. Batino

MANILA North Tollways Corp. is scheduled to take over the operations of the North Luzon Expressway on Feb. 10.

The schedule was set after the Tollway Regulatory Board approved yesterday the 380-percent toll adjustment sought by the Lopez-led consortium.

TRB executive director Manuel Imperial said MNTC must publish the new toll rates today. He said those who would object to the toll fee increase were given 90 days to file their objection before the tollway regulator.

MNTC president Jose "Ping" de Jesus said the consortium was ready to take over and was just waiting for the TRB's decision.

"Motorists can count on world-class roadside service, emergency assistance, well-trained tellers and patrol crew, and an efficient traffic management system," said De Jesus in an interview.

MNTC will deploy 18 service patrol vehicles and seven motorcycles to assist motorists, he added. Discounts to public utility vehicles will be made available by Thursday.

MNTCs Tollway Management Corp. will operate the NLEX for 30 years.

The NLEX currently charge a fee of 52-centavos per kilometer for cars and jeeps or those classified as class 1 vehicles.

De Jesus said MNTC would charge a flat fee of P42 for cars and jeeps, P106 for buses and light trucks and P127 on heavy trucks and trailers traveling the 14-km stretch classified as open highway from Balintawak to Bocaue in Bulacan.

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The spin masters behind the wheels

By Tessa R. Salazar

LOS ANGELES—A diversity of technologies, designs, cars and people themselves have given life and color to many an autoshow—the recently concluded North American International Auto Show (Naias) included. What gives an important auto event such as Naias infinite possibilities, however, are the thousands upon thousands of media personalities from all over the globe offering their many journalistic "spins" on the event, thereby securing local flavor to an international event.

However, it also makes spotting the celebrity journalists even more difficult. Take, for instance, the search for noted gender-breaking motoring journalist Jean Jennings amid 6,700 other warm newsmakers darting here and about in the huge Cobo Hall in Detroit. Not only had Jennings broken the gender barrier by being the woman editor in chief of a male-dominated Automobile Magazine, she has been holding her own, letting her skills and talents speak for themselves, thereby gaining her own fan base.

Too bad the INQUIRER just couldn't find her amid the hoopla of the auto show. She would have made for a separate article all by herself, what with her 20-year, worked-her-way-up career story starting with Car and Driver and then to Automobile Magazine.

Still, there was Motortrend editor in chief Angus McKenzie, ready and willing to be put on the spotlight. During a short chat with this writer, she learned that McKenzie joined Motortrend from Emap's Car Magazine, a top UK publication. What she learned from a separate research later on was that this soft-spoken man has been touted the "hottest" editor in automotive circles—and that came from another editor of a competitor magazine.

McKenzie then agreed to be filmed at the Cobo Hall, with the cars on display as his backdrop. Avid readers of Motortrend, however, may wonder: now where's the effervescent executive editor Matt Stone in all of this? To answer that query, INQUIRER had to go to Motortrend's Los Angeles offices on Wilshire Boulevard to catch up with Matt.

Inside the MT offices (where covers of magazines such as Road and Track, Automobile, Car and Driver and Motortrend served much like the wallpaper), a heavy-set man came in and offered an equally huge smile, and introduced himself as Matt Stone. Without that disarming smile, Stone could have fit the perfect profile for a schoolyard bully. And with his introduction of "So, you're Tessa?" our tete-a-tete began.

The first few questions were more introductory. The author learned Stone was second in command at Motortrend, was also in charge of advance and strategic planning, including story selection and editor assignments. He said he was also into automotive and special interest features, historic "In Retrospect" articles, comparison tests and MT's world-recognized Car, Truck and Sport/Utility programs. He could also be heard on the syndicated Motor Trend Radio Network, and serves as the magazine's history and design expert. This guy is a dynamo.

Q: I've scanned your website and it says Motor Trend has tested more vehicles than any other publication in the world. Do you have exact figures of how many vehicles you've tested so far?

A: It varies year by year and if we say we've tested vehicles, then that means we have it in house, we'll do instrumented testings and numbers and all that kind of things... anywhere from 240 to 280 vehicles a year.

How many test drivers do you have?

We have two that do the track testings. Two guys that do all the 0 to 60s, cornering and braking, plus a road test assistant and a technical director and that kind of makes up our track-testing crew, and needless to say, all our other editorial staff, they also do the drives and write the stories. But in terms of actual testing, we have a crew of four that does all of our number generation and stuff like that.

What are the equipment you use?

We use three different types of equipment. One of them is a radar gun-based system called the "stalker." That is a radar system that can either stand on a tripod and the car can move to it and forward or you can mount it in a car and it tracks the car's motion.

We have another system we are now evaluating called "racepak," which is a global positioning satellite-based system, and uses satellites from three standpoints, locks onto the car and then tracks its movements through the GPS satellites, which is deadly accurate. This allows you to do all sorts of interesting things, like (if) you put it on the race track, it will actually chart the car's course around the track and can give you laps, speeds and all kinds of fascinating stuff.

We use both right now—radar and GPS-based systems, but as soon as we know that it will do everything that we want it to do, we're gonna go all GPS.

How much do the equipment cost?

The equipment we use is about $10,000 for the GPS. That's state-of-the-art best you can get, including some software programming for us. There's a laptop, data recorder. Turnkey state-of-the-art is about $10,000.

And the "stalker"?

The stalker unit is about $6,000 to $8,000. It's somewhat less expensive, but we find it to be very accurate, by the way. It doesn't do as much as the GPS but the same test that it does is dead-on accurate. It's not as flexible but it's easier to use. So right now we're running both systems.

What is your view on developmental motoring? You've done every conceivable job in the motoring "book of magic." Is there a place in your heart for third-world friendly vehicles such as fuel misers and alternative fuel vehicles?

Absolutely. The car business is getting to be a global environment now. While there will always be a few vehicles that are not relevant in the market, there's more and more room for more and more variety. I am very concerned about the expense of cars. Cars are just costing too much money. Vehicles that don't have 47-way power-heated leather seats but just give better value or whatever, I think that's important. America is a large, and in some places, very rugged country. So there's room for trucks and little utilities and stuff like that, there's also room that cost of fuel has been an issue.

We had a little sample of that last year. We have had some very expensive fuel prices for us. Cheap for the rest of the world but expensive ... that caused people to wake up. All of a sudden, diesels and hybrids got very popular. We cannot keep ignoring that and driving around in a box ... you know, in Rolls Royces. So, yeah, those are coming and very relevant issues here. And the manufacturers that can develop and provide cost-effective, fuel-efficient products are going to find welcome markets here.

How hard or how easy is it to build a reputation as a journalist in the motoring industry, especially in America?

It's pretty tough because there are only so many positions and there are a lot of people who want them. There's a whole lot of people who love cars and we just love to drive cars all day but there are only so many spots. So everybody starts at the bottom and works up.

When I started 20 years ago, I did (work) in car club newsletters, car show programs and local newspapers, and a lot of them not even for pay. And then one day, you would be able to meet somebody with a magazine with an idea and you got a little piece published, and then another one published, and then every once in a while a staff job opens up. It's very difficult in this market. But there are a few women now, which is really good. It's about time.

You've been very encouraging to motoring writers from Car of the Year-Philippines the past few months now. What makes you think this would be all worth it for us?

The fact that you gathered and tried to have the standards of professionalism ... That elevates the industry to a higher level, and this has been developed substantially in America over the last 10 to 20 years.

You've been very accommodating.

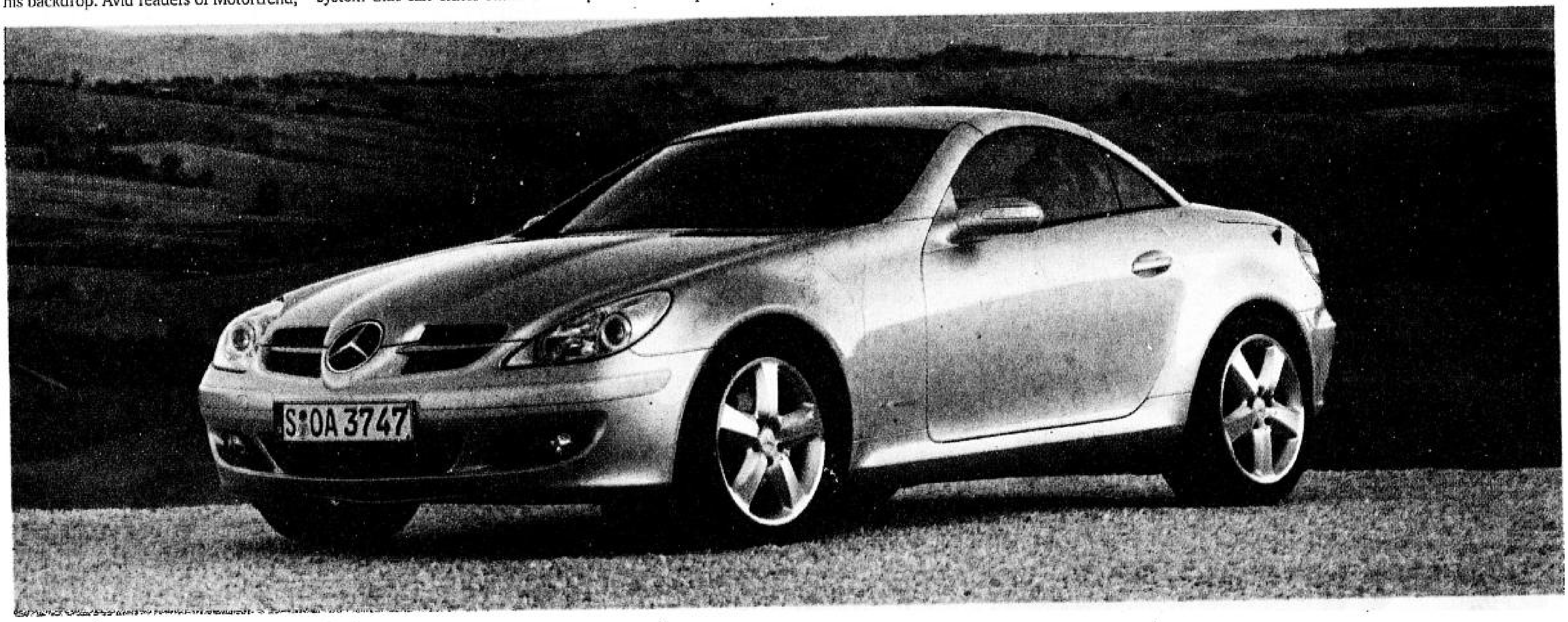
I'm just returning the favor. When I was just starting, some motoring editors had been supportive. Good luck with your Coty program. Hope it all goes well.

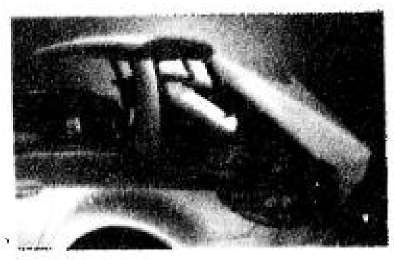
The visit to Motortrend was concluded with pictures taken—lots of it—as well as miniature car replicas—matchboxes to you—given to the author.

Note: Special thanks to General Motors (Philippines), GM Thailand and its US headquarters for making possible all the press conferences with the GM and Naias bigwigs and the eye-opening sidetrips.

MOTOR TREND
Car Of The Year

STONE with the author, and a "larger-than-life" trophy Coty-Philippines would love to give to the 2004 Car of the Year





Even standing still, it will move you.

. Go roadster to coupé in 22 seconds.

Available SLK models: SLK 200K and SLK 350

► There's more to the 2nd generation Mercedes-Benz SLK 350 that attracts the senses. For starters, the F1-inspired Mercedes Silver Arrows styling is impossible to ignore.

► Spring a surprise with its retractable Vario-Roof. Then feel the rush as you go from 0-100 km/h in 5.6 seconds.

► The new SLK-Class features a supercharged engine, a sleek steel alloy body and the 7-speed 7G-Tronic automatic transmission. Steering so precise others will be eating your dust.

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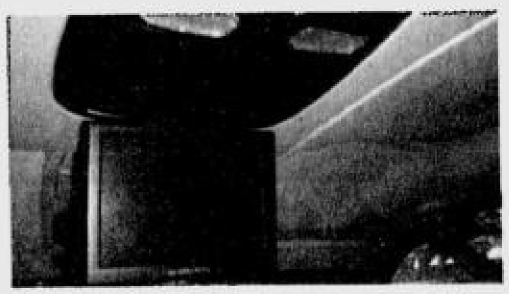
Email: mercedesbenz@cats.com.ph Website: www.mercedes-benz.com.ph

Giving RP travelers something to smile about


WITH AN ENTERTAINMENT system with a VCD player and flip-down monitor, the Chevy Venture makes travel fun for everyone.

Text and photos by Charles E. Buban

THE SOON-TO-BE-COMPLETED upgrading of the North Luzon Expressway has indeed brought a lot of smiles from those traveling along its 84-kilometer length.

As one of its newest fans, I could almost feel like I was driving along the Southern Tagalog Arterial Road (Star) in Batangas, as we cruise down the highway at an average of 100 kph.

Of course, being onboard the Chevrolet Venture also gave tremendous boost to my imagination.

The Venture was the latest vehicle lent to me by General Motors Automobiles Philippines so that I could experience why this minivan is being regarded by many American families as their favorite.

Three trims

There are three trims available here in the country: the seven-seater CT (P1.199 million), nine-seater LT (P1.315 million) and the seven-seater LT Premium (P1.515 million).

The one I got was the LT Premium that is equipped with a three-liter V6 engine with four-speed automatic transmission, dual sliding rear-side doors, power-assists four-wheel disc with four wheel antilock brakes, dual airbags (for driver and front passenger), Rear Parking Assistant (alerts the driver of objects or people behind the vehicle with both audio and visual signals while the van is in reverse) as well as a host of other wonderful driver and passenger amenities inside.

With a fuel tank capacity of 75.7 liters and a fuel usage of around 17 L/100 km (in a mix of city/highway driving), I believe this is one minivan that can get you far without making too many trips to the gasoline station.

Smooth and quiet

On the road, the Venture is smooth and quiet with good throttle response and car-like handling.

This can be attributed to the minivan's independent MacPherson struts with standard front stabilizer bar suspensions in front and semi-independent, twist axle/coil spring suspensions at the rear.

Its power rack-and-pinion steering also helps make the Venture maneuverable as if it were a sedan.

Indeed, the Venture is designed for people with places to go and chores to do—where trucks and four-door sedans fall short, the Venture makes up for it with outstanding versatility, thanks to its outstanding convenience features and comfortable amenities.

TRAVELING through the NLEX is much better these days.

Dual sliding doors

This minivan has dual sliding rear-side doors that allow passengers to enter and exit the van comfortably—a feature that is particularly handy when occupants almost always try to cram into a van at once.

It also features second-row bucket seats that are light enough for easy rearranging, removal. The stowable third-row seat doesn't disappear into the floor, but folds level with a convenience tray that stands about 10 centimeters above the floor.

To help the driver, the Venture also has the Driver Information Center, a computerized monitor (integrated into the extended overhead console) that features an electronic eight-point compass, outside temperature display, a fuel economy/range calculator and trip computer.

A VCD-based entertainment system with a single 7" inch monitor (mounted at the center of the vehicle), four speakers heads and radio/CD volume that adjusts up or down to the speed of driving, head the list of entertainment features inside this family-oriented minivan.

Indeed if your travel will require spending a lot of time sitting inside a vehicle, these comfort features inside the Venture are values one will truly appreciate.

THE CHEVY Venture Minivan offers a lot of value for your money.

Hi-Lux is it; Honda's staying power

FULL TANK

Al Mendoza

I MUST admit the new Toyota Hi-Lux is the best pickup (they call a pickup truck in the United States) in town today. If you can't believe that, try test-driving it.

For one, it drives like a car. It doesn't have the noise of diesel; it hums like a car. For another, it speeds off like a virtual sports car if you want to race it. Amazingly, it's light as a feather, despite the massiveness of its mean, solid look. I had outraced all kinds of vehicles that tried to challenge it at the North Luzon Expressway just a while back.

For P1.3 million (the 3.0-liter 4x4 model), the new Hi-Lux is a steal.

Incidentally, the Hi-Lux is the hole-in-one prize in the Konica Minolta National Pro/Am at the Riviera Golf Club Feb. 8-12.

* * *

The Honda CR-V has remained strong as ever. Isn't it a wonder that despite the arrival of many models recently, CR-V's popularity hasn't waned one bit?

With its competitive price, remarkable features and a wide selection of models, the Honda CR-V continues to lead the competition as the most popular SUV in the Philippines.

According to sales reports from the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines (Campi), a total of 3,183 CR-V units were sold in 2004, giving the Honda CR-V a 20 percent share of the SUV market.

The latest record gave CR-V a total of 31,623 units sold since it rolled out of the assembly lines in 1998.

* * *

What could be the secret of the CR-V's staying power?

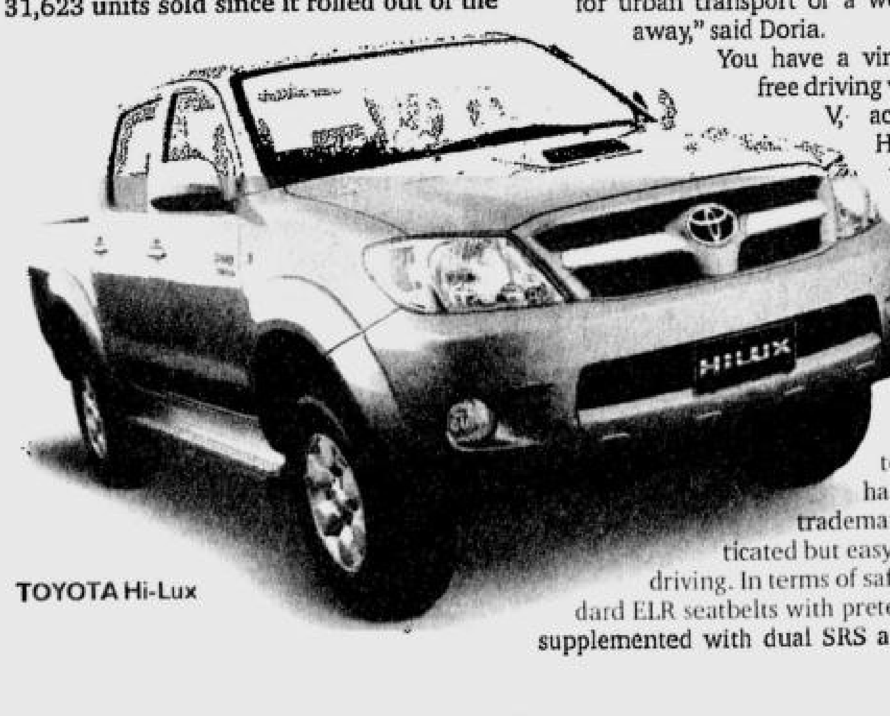
"It is Honda's world-renowned quality that makes CR-V still a big hit up to today," said Arnel Doria of Honda Cars Philippines.

Arnel backs that up with the fact that the CR-V earned the highest rating in SUV segment of J.D. Power Asia's "Initial Quality Survey" in the Philippines in 2004 for having the fewest initial quality problems. The CR-V also topped the study with its strong performance driven by industry leading scores in the ride, handling and braking, features and controls, vehicle exterior and transmission categories.

The Honda CR-V boasts of an engine that is powerful, fuel-efficient and runs clean all the time, combining, what its engineers say, the VTC with its renowned VTEC innovation to achieve an evolutionary i-VTEC performance (VTEC + VTC = i-VTEC).

"This ingenuity is a class of its own that combines sheer comfort with its daring command of the road, making it a perfect vehicle for urban transport or a weekend getaway," said Doria.

You have a virtual worry-free driving with the CR-V, according to Honda engineers. Propelled through its unique "Real-time" four-wheel-drive system, the CR-V has become the trademark in sophisticated but easy-to-use 4WD driving. In terms of safety, the standard ELR seatbelts with pretensioners are supplemented with dual SRS airbag system and antilock brake system (ABS) that is controlled through electronic brake-force distribution system (EBS).


TOYOTA Hi-Lux

Said the CR-V manual: "Honda's safety concern extends from the welfare of other vehicles and pedestrians. Advanced technologies for accident avoidance and injury prevention help ensure safety in motion that is why Honda strives for optimum protection in the CR-V, so you can enjoy driving that liberates you.

"Developed from the platform of the popular Civic, the CR-V has a refined suspension that is tuned for passenger car-like riding comfort with responsive handling. This is a vehicle that is equally at home on urban streets or on rough terrain proving that indeed the CR-V is the leader of the SUV pack."

Raise your glass, Arnel.

By the way, is it true Min Magbal isn't going back anymore to Honda? If so, do I see Tintin Reyes moving up—finally?

* * *

Congrats to Volvo V50, which has been awarded the "Goldeness Lenkrad" (Golden Steering Wheel), a trophy instituted by the German paper Bild am Sonntag. This is the second time a Volvo has been awarded the prestigious award.

"This is a great honor and most rewarding for us," said Hans-Olov Olsson, president and CEO of Volvo Car Corp., during the awarding ceremonies in Berlin.

The Volvo V50 also won the estate class in the "Readers Category."

The Golden Steering Wheel awards were started 29 years ago. This marked the second time Volvo won, adding its plum in 2000 when the Volvo S60 received the same honor.

I'm sure Albert Arcilla, who heads the Viking Cars, the country's official distributor of Volvo cars, is thrilled to the bones with this latest Volvo award.

Volvo showrooms are located on Chino Roces Avenue, Makati and at 88 ADB Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City. The winning V50 car is on display there, together with the S40, sporty S60, the flagship S80, the rugged XC70 and the award-winning XC90.

* * *

QUOTE ME. Ten out of 12 drivers won't move to the right side of the North Luzon Expressway despite your furious horn-honking to signal that you intend to overtake him.

Nissan holds Love Flights promo

GETTING a free holiday for two in Singapore, Bangkok or Kuala Lumpur these days seem unreal. But that is for real as authorized dealers of Nissan Motor Philippines Inc. are giving away holiday packages to buyers of the Cefiro, X-Trail, Serena and Sentra from Feb. 4 to 28 in "Nissan Love Flights."

On top of the start-of-the-year holiday giveaways, Cefiro, X-Trail and Sentra buyers can avail of low-down payment financing packages. Also offered are special Valentine's rates exclusively for the Sentra 1.6 GSX M/T and 1.6 GS A/T, and the Cefiro 2.0 Classic.

Holiday giveaways

"Our Nissan Love Flights promo should never be missed by those who have been planning to buy a Cefiro, X-Trail or Sentra, for they now have a chance to get holiday packages for two if they buy within the promo period. Then there's also attractive financing packages for them," explained Herbert Tan, VP for operations at one of NMPI's most successful dealerships, Mantrade Development Corp.

All Nissan dealers in Metro Manila plus Nissan Southwoods in Carmona will also be holding two Valentine weekends on Feb. 4 and Feb. 11, where their loyal customers and buyers have the chance to win raffle prizes on top of enjoying a romantic atmosphere at the dealers.

Buyers of the Sentra get an overnight stay for two in a domestic holiday destination or a hotel in Metro Manila, depending on what variant they will purchase.

Financing packages

As little as P100,000 for the Cefiro and X-Trail and P65,000 for the Sentra will be made available to buyers who troop to Nissan dealers from Feb. 4 to 28.

Likewise, buyers of the Sentra 1.6 GSX M/T can make a low down payment of P65,000, while those eyeing a Sentra 1.6 GS MT can make a low down payment of P70,000. Meanwhile, the Cefiro 2.0 Classic can be driven home with just a P100,000 down payment. Reasonable installment schemes for 36 and 48 months also await buyers of the Sentra 1.6 GS MT and 1.6 GSX M/T, and the Cefiro 2.0 Classic.

"With so much in store for Nissan car buyers for the whole month of February, there is absolutely no reason those wanting to buy a Cefiro, X-Trail, Serena and Sentra won't go to their nearest Nissan dealership. And there's a Valentine atmosphere ready to greet them on Feb. 4 and 11," remarked Tey Sornet, VP of the premier NMPI dealer, Nissan Westgate in Alabang.

Favorite vehicles

On one hand, the Sentra GS and GSX remain a favorite among full-sized car buyers wanting the power of a 1.6-liter engine, and the control of a manual transmission. The Cefiro Classic gives midsized car buyers the chance to own one of Nissan's bestsellers at reasonable price, and at the same time enjoy the smooth revving qualities of the venerable 2.0-liter VQ engine plus the luxury ride that has made the Cefiros one of the most comfortable cars in its class.

The mighty X-Trails, the Cefiro 300EX and the Sentra 180GT are known to be the choice of people who want power and luxury, aside from outstanding styling.

BMW EXECUTIVE DAYS

Preferential deals on nearly new vehicles

FROM FEB. 4 to Feb. 13, BMW is celebrating "Executive Days"—a 10-day special retail event at all authorized dealerships that will feature the latest vehicles under BMW's pioneering certified preowned program.

As a special highlight, BMW Philippines announced that a limited number of 3 Series units specially selected by its top executives will be available during this period at preferential prices and easy payment terms.

Covered by comprehensive new car warranty, these exceptionally maintained, low mileage vehicles offer the reliability and sheer driving pleasure expected from BMW.

Innovative financing offer

Customers can drive away these selected 3 Series units and take advantage of BMW's innovative financing offer: three equal payments over three years at 0 percent interest. This financing plan offers the freedom of zero interest payments without monthly instalments, through a one-third down payment and equivalent balance payments after 12 and 24 months. respectively.

The assurance of BMW quality, combined with easy payment terms, contributes to the exceptional value of the specially selected BMW vehicles available for this limited period.

The BMW Executive Days will be held at all authorized BMW dealers, namely Autohaus BMW (Quezon City), Autozentrum BMW (Alabang), Prestige Cars BMW (Makati), Premier Cars BMW (Pampanga) and Performance BMW (Cebu).

NEW and nearly new BMWs are available during BMW Executive Days.

Spanish fling

AUTOVIA at 120 kph

CATCH MY DRIFT

Andre Palma

BEING a tourist is great for perspective. Unfamiliar environs and culture serve as points of comparison for one's own, allowing the tourist to take a step back and asses his or her own beliefs and knowledge. This "touring phenomenology" is great for the soul as it keeps biases shelved and our egos grounded. As a student of motoring, seeing how other countries manage their roadways and how the locals drive broadens our outlook. The way we react and drive in other environments, in turn, tells very much of ourselves. We are how we drive.

Last week found me on such a trip, as I was at the international media launch of a new BMW model in Valencia, Spain. The city of Valencia, hemmed in on all sides by orange groves and the sea, is visually stunning. Between the old limestone architecture and the true Spanish mestizas, one is easily distracted.

Keeping on one's toes

This is not entirely a good thing, because in a city of small side streets and boulevards punctuated by roundabouts, it is best to keep on one's toes when in pedestrian mode. I saw three accidents during my short stay—one pedestrian hit and run, a fender bender in a roundabout, and some boy-racer hot hatch, probably a Mk. IV Golf Gti, that looked like it was attacked with a can opener. Cars and motorcycles travel fast, even in the old city and the locals are very aware of this danger. They know how lethal getting hit by a car is, so they give even the smallest Fiat Panda a wide berth. A German driver we were with, expressed disbelief at the chaos that was Valencia traffic. "Crazy" was the word she uttered, her deep blue eyes expressing more disgust than fear. Think of Intramuros with small cars zipping around at 60 to 80 km/h.

A scheduled drive to the city of Albacete, through a route taking 216 km, was met by both excitement and a little apprehension. The initial stretch of the trip would involve getting out of Valencia and then proceeding 80 km on the A3 Autovia, a section of the Spanish Autobahn headed for our exit in the town of Requena. The road book supplied by BMW stated a 120 km/h speed limit on motorways (roads slightly larger than our SLEX and NLEX) and, from our take-off at the monolithic "Cuidad de las Artes e las Ciencas," I was praying that I would be able to safely get to our destination or to the exit at least; so the speeds would slow to a easier pace. I was wrong about the speeds from the start, we would be traveling faster.

Driving discipline

Traffic on the Autovia travels at a steady 140 km/h clip. Merging skills are key, as on-ramps and off-ramps are used to get to the A3 from Valencia proper. Spanish driving on the Autovia is generally disciplined and skilled. There were just a few instances where cars without side-view mirrors had to be reminded that I existed. Trucks and buses kept to their assigned lane but were not above bullying the odd small car into slowing down to allow the huge transporters to overtake out of their lane.

This section of the trip was incident free, at times reaching 160 km/h on downhill sections, hurtling along with the rest of the flowing traffic. It's a good thing that I brought along my trusty driving gloves, as the steering wheel would have been slick with sweat had I not.

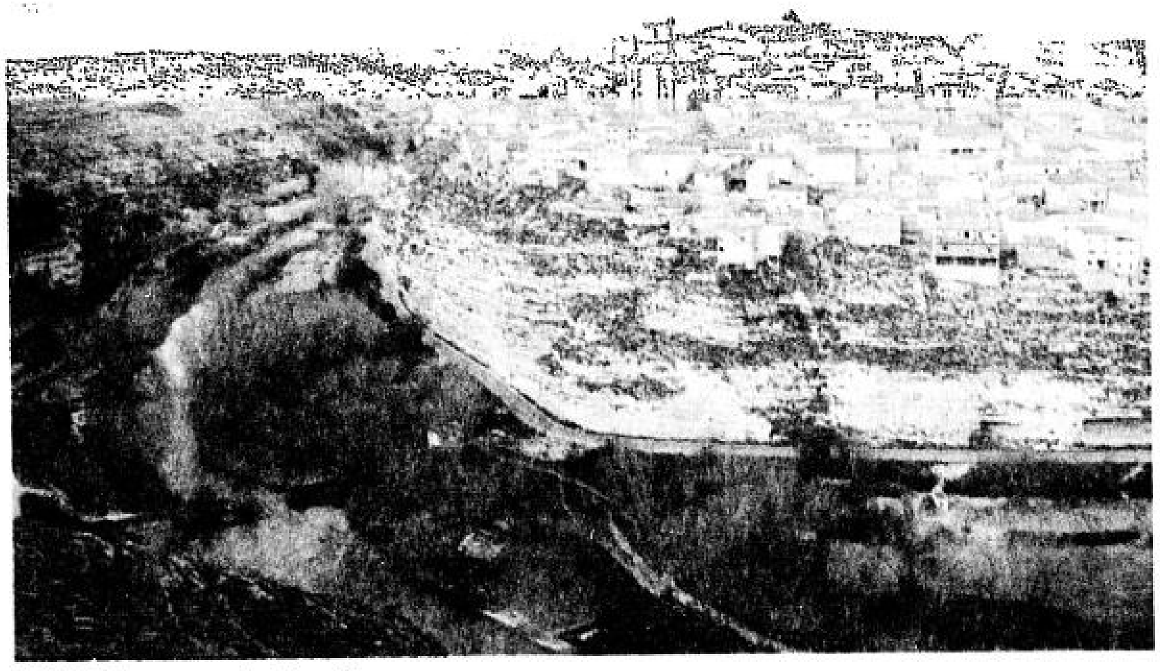
Spanish highways

Exiting the A3 to Requena put us on the local Spanish highways which had a legal top speed of 100 km/h. These are two-lane roads, well maintained, linking up small provincial towns. When approaching towns, speeds are mandated at 90km/h with signs counting down, in increments of 10 km/h, down to 50 km/h, which is the maximum speed inside small towns. The next 80 km would take us through the town of Cofrentes, through some beautiful mountain passes and expansive vineyards, to sleepy Casas Ibañez. The drive after this point would be anything but sleepy and be some of the best roads I have ever driven so far.

The CM-3201 highway, headed for Alcala del Jucar, is a simple two-lane road framed by vast expanses of open field. Well maintained and planned, it is possible to see two or three km ahead at some points. There are rarely any intersections, and if there are, these are well marked and can be seen from a substantial distance. Speeds in this section of the road are limited to 100 km/h, but let's just say we kept our eyes open for the Guardia Civil and let our Autobahn burners rip. We passed motoring journalists from other countries making the same pilgrimage to Albacete, and their looks of shock and disbelief at the lunch, later that afternoon, confirmed that laws were broken short of the Laws of Physics.

The best drive of my life

I entered the twisty mountain sections between Alcala del Jucar and La Recueja with smooth driving in mind. I had a passenger, Lito German of BMW Philippines, who I wanted to keep happy. This was going to be a difficult task as this road is similar to the ones you see driven on the WRC (World Rally Championship) legs of Catalunya, Corsica and San Remo.

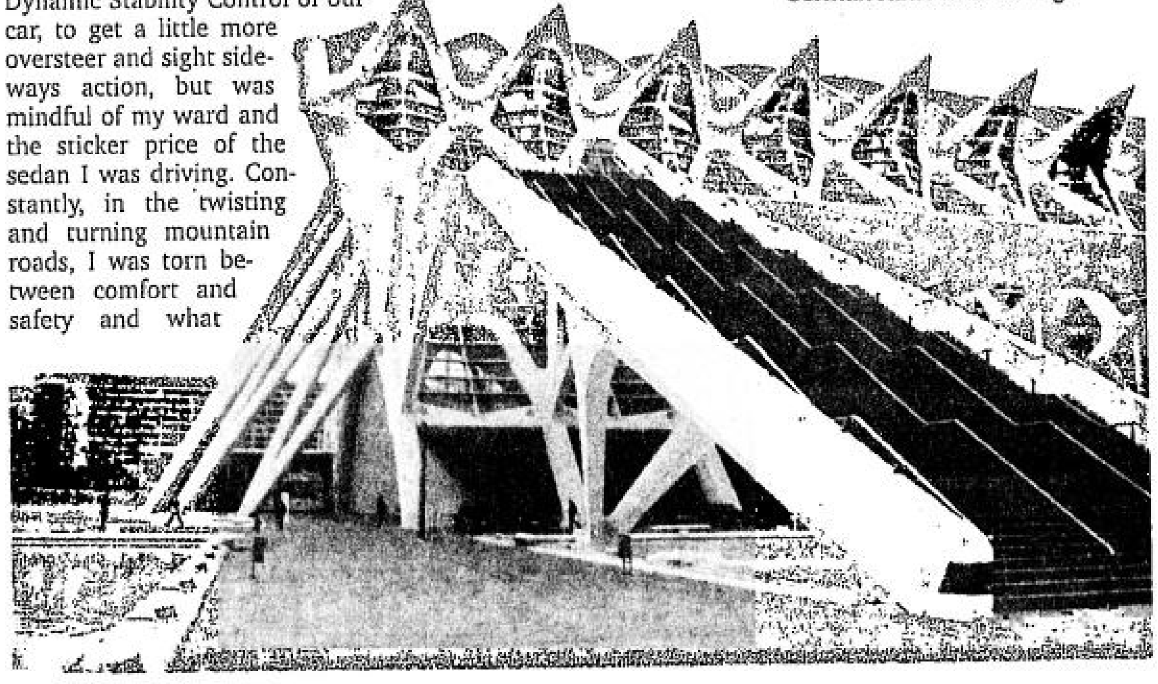


HILLSIDE town near La Recueja

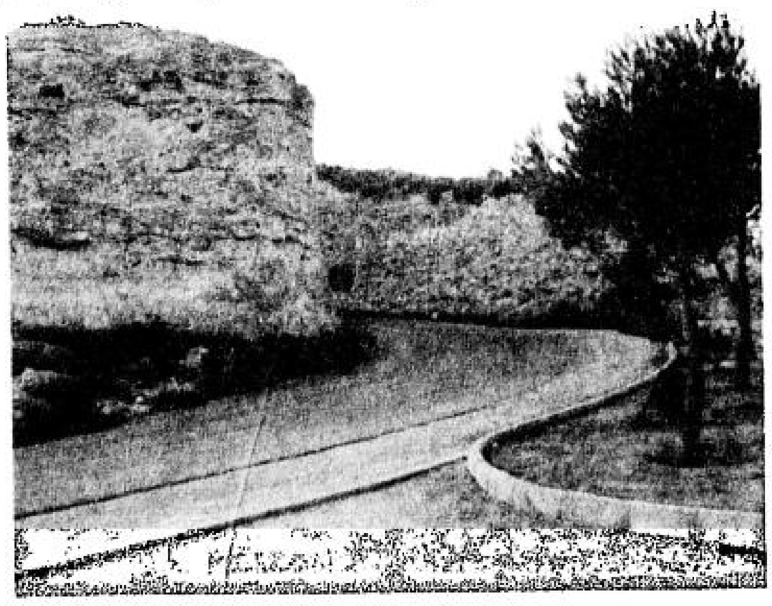
The tarmac flowed, despite the drastic changes of elevation and camber. Often it seemed that the mountain wanted to push you right off the tarmac, with only small concrete blocks to keep you from enjoying the scenery in a drastically more intimate fashion. I had wanted to turn off the Dynamic Stability Control of our car, to get a little more oversteer and sight sideways action, but was mindful of my ward and the sticker price of the sedan I was driving. Constantly, in the twisting and turning mountain roads, I was torn between comfort and safety and what probably would have been the ultimate driving pleasure. Luckily, the road straightened out on the way to Casas De Juan Nuñez.

The CM-332 all the way to Albacete can be best described as a straight 23 km line drawn onto the plains of La Mancha. With our ultimate goal in mind, the opportunity to drive on the Circuito de Velocidad, the local racetrack, the highway disappeared in no time at all. It was a comfortable, relaxed sprint driven at speeds that would make my mother-in-law angry.

At the control point in Albacete, I reluctantly returned the keys of my assigned car. I had just been through half a day of diverse driving conditions, some of which taken at breath-robbing velocity, through the beautiful Spanish countryside. Our party was all safe and sound at the destination and with no Guardia Civil waiting for us. Right at that moment I began to ponder what was probably the best drive, to date, of my life and sat, basking in the 3 degree Celsius sunshine. Lito German said I was smiling.



CIUDAD de las Artes e las Ciencas, Valencia



MOUNTAIN pass near "Alcala de Jucar"

Honda Cars Makati offers 25-point car checkup

HONDA Cars Makati Inc. now offers the "Free 25-Point Car Check up" service promo to all owners of out-of-warranty Honda vehicles. Honda owners can now ensure the optimum performance of their Honda vehicles by availing of the free preventive maintenance consultation.

For appointment booking and more information on the promo, please call the service reception of your preferred HCMI branch: Honda Cars Makati 852-4181 local 135, 147, 150 and 158; Honda Cars Pasig 637-2983 or 634-2730 loc. 504, 505; Honda Cars Alabang 807-0296 or 807-0284; and Honda Cars Shaw 717-1687 or 71701681 loc. 101, 102 and 307.

Interested customers may also inquire through HondaTXT: (0917) 817-0707 for Globe and (0920) 917-0707 for Smart/Talk N' Text subscribers; or log on to the HCMI website (www.hondamakati.com.ph). Service operations is from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Mondays through Saturdays (except during holidays).

HCMI is a member of the Ayala group of companies.

The BMW Executive Days at Autohaus BMW.

Get the best BMW Experience from February 4-13, 2005.

Selected BMW Executive Cars with low mileage are available at Autohaus BMW. And with our special financing offer, you get the easy road to pure BMW Experience: no monthly amortization, just 3 equal payments at 0% interest* for select **BMW 3 Series and BMW X3 cars.**

* Provided equal payments due are paid in full and subject to bank approval by Security Bank.

• 1/3 - down payment • 1/3 - on the 12th month • 1/3 - on the 24th month

BMW 316i Edition 2004 Sienna Red 2,000km, P1,685,000	**BMW 316i Edition** 2004 Titanium Silver 2,900km, P1,685,000	**BMW 318i M Sport** 2004 Topaz Blue 6,400km, P2,500,000	**BMW 325i M Sport** 2004 Steel Gray 5,100km, P3,200,000	**BMW X3 3.0i Exec.** 2004 Mystic Blue 3,900km, P3,950,000
BMW 316i Edition 2004 Titanium Silver 1,800km, P1,685,000	**BMW 318i Edition** 2004 Titanium Silver 5,600km, P2,075,000	**BMW 325i Exec.** 2004 Titanium Silver 11,000km, P2,600,000	**BMW 325i M Sport** 2004 Imola Red 5,500km, P3,200,000	
BMW 316i Edition 2004 Black Sapphire 900km, P1,700,000	**BMW 318i Edition** 2004 Black Sapphire 5,000km, P2,075,000	**BMW 325i Exec.** 2004 Black Sapphire 3,300km, P3,100,000	**BMW 325i M Sport** 2004 Black Sapphire 1,500km, P3,300,000	
BMW 316i Edition 2004 Aspen Silver 2,300km, P1,685,000	**BMW 318i M Sport** 2004 Titanium Silver 5,000km, P2,500,000	**BMW 325i Exec.** 2004 Steel Gray 5,300km, P3,100,000	**BMW X3 2.5i Exec.** 2004 Black Sapphire 2,500km, P3,750,000	

Enjoy other highlights of the BMW Experience:

- Test-drive a BMW during the Autohaus BMW Executive Days and get the chance to win BMW premium items.
- Enjoy complimentary food and drinks at Zeno BMW Lifestyle Lounge while viewing the exciting selection of BMW models.
- Other models available with special financing deals.

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0509 Series of 2005

MOTOR

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Sportivo

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

Isuzu Philippines Corp. is the car manufacturer that has gone the farthest to bridge the gap between Asian utility vehicles (AUVs) and sport utility vehicles (SUVs). Starting with the transformation of its Hi-Lander from a boxy, prosaic AUV into the sleek, aerodynamically designed Crosswind four years ago, Isuzu has improved its AUV-cum-SUV almost every year.

The Crosswind XTO was launched in June 2001 as the first DAT (Diesel Automatic Turbo), its robust 2.5-liter powerplant being the first and only diesel direct injection turbocharged engine in its class mated to a 4-speed automatic transmission with overdrive. Moreover, the XTO, like a luxury car, had dual aircon, fog lamps and keyless entry as standard equipment.

Biggest

Isuzu followed this up in February 2002 with the intro of the Crosswind XUV (Extreme Utility Vehicle) that was the biggest, tallest and widest vehicle in its class although sharing the same platform as the XTO. The XUV was the first AUV to sport a rear-door-mounted spare tire carrier with body-color-keyed hard cover. What's more, the XUV was shod with the biggest (235/70R15) tires in its class and these were Michelin tires, at that. Because of its big feet, rear-door-mounted spare tire, swing-out tailgate and extraordinary height equal to that of the Isuzu Trooper, the XUV was an SUV dead-ringer.

Barely five months later, in July 2002, Isuzu unveiled the XUVi—"innovative, immeasurable, incomparable"—Crosswind variant with an inside story: the first in its class to be equipped with a videoke system entertainment package that included a single in-dash CD player, two 5.6-inch headrest-mounted LCD monitors, two wireless mikes and remote control. Thus, a videoke bar to entertain passengers when stuck in traffic or motoring on long trips.

In 2003, Isuzu offered six new body colors for the Crosswind line and two-tone black and gray leather seats. These minor changes could have signaled more substantial improvements in the pipeline and sure enough, last October, Isuzu launched its 2005 high-end Crosswind variant, the Sportivo.

Style in motion

Touted as "Style in Motion," the Sportivo has wider multireflector headlamps; more curvaceous rear combination lamps; a redesigned chrome-accented radiator grille; a shapelier two-piece black-and-body-color front bumper with integrated round fog lamps; new silver finish alloy mag-wheels; anodized black aluminum roof rails; a newly designed Sportivo spare tire hard cover with cable lock; and, most noteworthy of all, chrome side-view mirrors with LED signal lamps.

Inside, sliding and reclining black leather bucket seats for driver and front passenger have replaced the driver-plus-two passengers front seat; the jump seats in the rear have been replaced with a front-facing third-row seat, access to which is facilitated by folding second-row seats; titanium silver panels, window bezels and aircon vents snazz up the cockpit and a roomy front center console with lid cover can accommodate a dozen CDs, VCDs or DVDs. The headrest-mounted dual LCD monitors are still there, but instead of a videoke, a DVD system and AV input jack with power inverter and infrared headphone system can keep passengers entertained during long hauls.

Flex ride

Engineering-wise, the Sportivo's major improvement is its Flex Ride Suspension System which, Isuzu claims, helps the semi-elliptical steel leaf springs at the rear to absorb road shocks and provide a smooth, comfortable ride without sacrificing stability and safety. However, I wasn't able to check out the effectivity of Flex Ride since I never got to sit in the back during the week that the Sportivo was with me. I was always driving and experienced a comfy carlike ride because of the independent double wishbone and torsion bar springs with stabilizer bar up front.

The Sportivo is unlikely to win any 0-to100 km/hr acceleration contests, but then AUVs are meant to carry seven people and cargo at lower cost than SUVs or minivans, not win races.

In the last analysis, when you consider that the Sportivo is loaded with features inside and outside that can sometimes only be found in higher-priced vehicles, and that it is powered by Isuzu's indisputably strong, reliable and fuel-efficient 2.5-liter OHV 4JAI-L direct injection turbocharged diesel engine delivering 85 ps @ 3,900 rpm max output and 18.9 kg m @ 2,000 rpm max torque, you can't castigate Isuzu for harboring SUV pretensions. At P1.085 million, the automatic transmission Sportivo may be pricier than the two other diesel AUVs in the market, but hey, it's a top-of-the-line Isuzu.

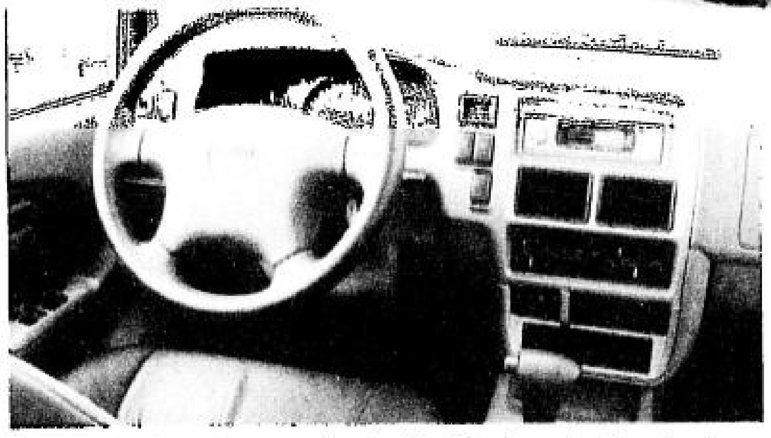
* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: Never lend your car to anyone to whom you've given birth. — *Erma Bombeck.*

* * *

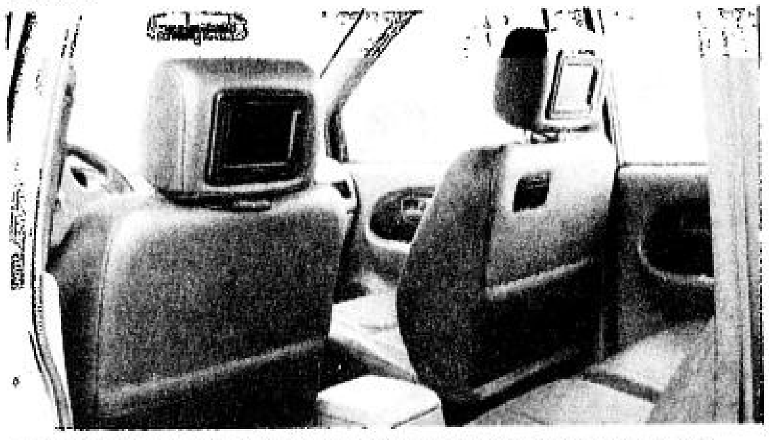
(E-mail comments to asevilla@inquirer.com.ph)

WIDER multireflector headlamps, a new chrome-accented grille and a two-piece, black and body color front bumper distinguish the Sportivo from the Crosswind XUV line.



TITANIUM silver accents, a 4-spoke black leather steering wheel, black leather bucket seats and a DVD/CD tuner in the Sportivo's cockpit.

PHOTOS BY: AIDA SEVILLA-MENDOZA



HEADREST-MOUNTED LCD monitors are part of the Sportivo's DVD entertainment system.

INFLATE your tire properly for increased mileage.

Be 'car-care aware'

IT'S "Car Care Sale" season at Handyman Do it Best Home Center (Handyman) Feb. 24!

Car care tips

Grab the benefits of practical car care, safer roads and consumer savings as you "drive it best" with these proper driving habits and car care tips:

- **Go smooth and slow.** Aside from being the safer option, your car's fuel efficiency decreases significantly at speeds over 55 miles per hour. Slow-but-sure driving minimizes the risk of heat buildup and excessive, uneven wear on tire treads. Driving smoothly saves on gas and lowers vehicle emissions. Accelerate slowly and gently and avoid sudden starts and stops, holes and rough roads.
- **Not too heavy.** Drag reduces fuel efficiency, so driving with the windows open, using roof- or rear-mounted racks, and carrying heavy loads increase vehicle drag. If you sometimes need to transport large items, use a removable rack or, if possible, carry the items in the trunk or inside the vehicle. Remove heavy items from the vehicle when you don't need them.
- **Be ready!** Have an emergency kit ready in your trunk: early warning device (EWD), car jack, spare wiper blades and fuses, bottled water, flashlight with spare batteries, basic tools such as screwdriver, pliers, adjustable wrench, an emergency supply of medicines, first aid cables kit, flares and jumper. Handyman has wide array of car care gadgets at very reasonable prices; check them out while they're on sale!
- **Turn off when not in use.** This means no more lengthy idling. Don't start your car until you're ready to go and remember to keep engine warm-ups brief. When stuck in heavy traffic or at your favorite fast-food drive-in window? Better turn that engine off or lift the hand break so you can release the accelerator and clutch to avoid wastage.
- **No more tired tires.** There is a recommended tire pressure for your car's different speeds and loads. Check your owner's manual or visit the manufacturer or local tire dealer. Tires that aren't properly inflated decreases gas mileage, leads to shorter tire life, and affects your car's alignment.
- **Car commitments.** Make under hood checks once a week or when refueling. Have an oil change every 3,000 miles with oil filter. Wash once a week. Hand washing is best, but if you must use a car wash, find one that is brushless and relies on high pressure water, or attendants that soap the car by hand. Wax for added protection.

To ultimately save on gas, make fewer trips by consolidating errands and trips, or you may want to car pool. Drive bad car habits away today!

Free key chain and save 10 percent on key duplication service. Visit Handyman's auto parts section of Handyman Do it Best in Robinsons Metro East; Robinsons Place in Ermita, Dasmariñas and Imus; Festival Mall Alabang; Handyman Do It Center at Robinsons Place Novaliches and Pioneer for quality car-care necessities! Handyman has branches in all Robinsons Malls, Waltermart Malls and selected malls nationwide.

Toyota introduces all-new Hiace Commuter

TOYOTA Motor Philippines recently launched the all-new Hiace Commuter.

The new Hiace is packaged with an entirely new concept that combines large cargo space for functionality, a unique styling that gives an advanced powerful look, and a driving performance, which incorporates a direct injection four-stroke Common Rail Diesel Engine (D-4D).

It raises the standard in the utility van segment by providing customers with an evolution of functions: cargo, capacity, durability, reliability and economy.

Exterior, design

The new Hiace was not merely designed for functionality; it was also developed to make work and operation more enjoyable. Its exterior emphasizes a square body to portray a dynamic form. The Hiace engineers pursued an innovative exterior style suitable for a vehicle that is bound to last. The dynamic front-view features voluminous sweeping curves and a big masculine bumper to emphasize the advanced styling, which goes beyond the traditional image of a commercial vehicle.

Toyota's new utility van incorporates a cab-forward configuration to allow for the largest possible passenger space. Upfront, the Hiace's nose line runs from the bulging center along both sides. Its windshield adopts green glass, while the side-window graphics hide the side pillars and highlights its stylish image.

Unlike the usual vertical rear pillars, the Hiace's pillars slant rearward, while the quarter pillars are hidden by the window glass to create a smooth continuous design. Its sliding door rails are now color-keyed and are integrated with the character lines, creating a fresh image. Full hubcaps also become a standard equipment to fully upgrade the commuter image to a higher-end vehicle.

Interior

The newly developed package of the Hiace offers long, wide interior space with four rows of passenger seat with the width that allows a passenger load of 15 adults to sit in comfort with ample leg space.

Its height and width suit the configuration of the wide sliding doors that allow two passengers to get in and out at the same time. This is complimented by the side step for easy entry and exit of passengers, whether adult or child.

In addition, mechanical lock type sliding doors make downgrade loading or unloading much easier.

Toyota pursued comfort in the smallest details taking into consideration that the Hiace, which carries cargo, offers space and comfort that enhances the experience of their passengers. With the hew Hiace, pursuit of comfort is high priority, as can be seen from the air conditioning to the quietness of the interior.

The commuter models have air outlets in the roof above the passenger seats so each seat enjoys a comfortable temperature. With a commercial vehicle, great audio makes driving time more enjoyable for both drivers and passengers. The audio unit contains an AM/FM tuner, as well CD and MP3 player to promote relaxation during long hours of driving and transporting.

The new Hiace is powered by a 2KD-FTV, 2.5-liter turbocharged diesel engine with advanced common rail fuel supply system that provides the torque that a commercial vehicle requires.

Durability, safety

Commercial vehicles are used for business, so they must be able to stand up under long hours of heavy use. The new Hiace has a rugged frame that is built of carrying full load of passengers or cargo.

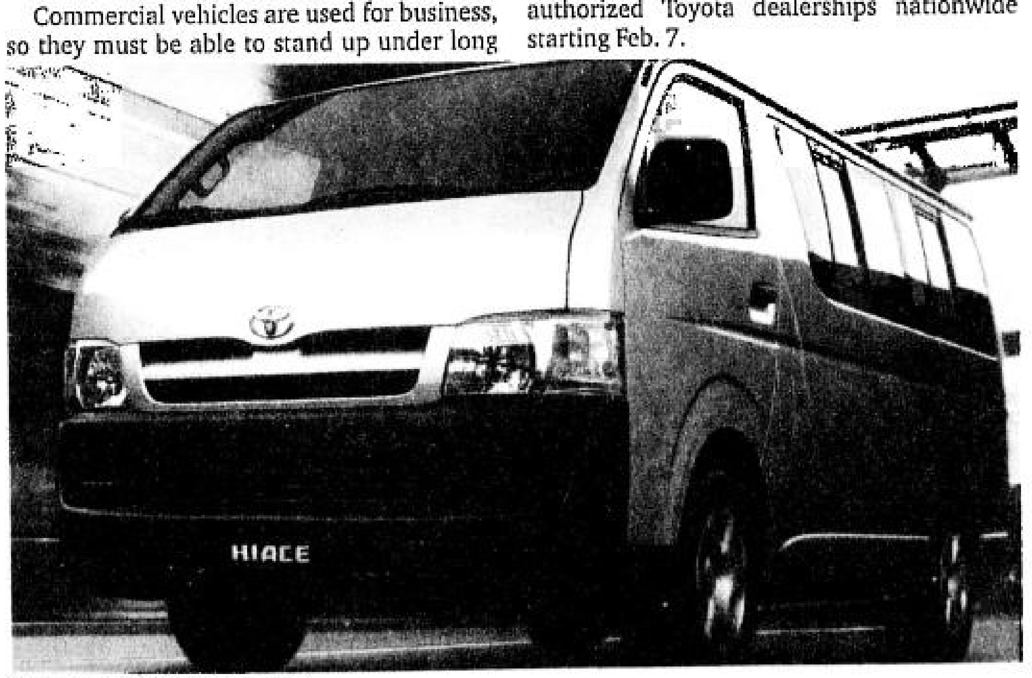
The latest computer-aided engineering (CAE) technique was used to determine and analyze potential sources of noise and vibration, resulting to a torsional rigidity that is 40 percent higher than that of the current model. In addition to the rigid, rust-resistant body, the Hiace is structured in a way that makes daily checks and maintenance easier, keeping the cost-performance ratio amazingly low.

Taking how commercial vehicles are used, the new Hiace offers excellent safety features to prevent accidents and protect occupants. It incorporates multireflector headlamps that throw a more effective light pattern. Nighttime driving feels safer due to the bright light patterns either high or low beams.

Color lineup, pricing

The new Hiace is available in three shades: silver metallic, white and dark green mica metallic.

It is offered at P1,048,000 and is available for viewing for all interested customers at all authorized Toyota dealerships nationwide starting Feb. 7.



ALL-NEW Hiace commuter

Shell to supply CNG to public transport buses

PILIPINAS Shell Petroleum Corp. president Edgar O. Chua and Energy Undersecretary Peter Anthony A. Abaya recently signed the supplement to the memorandum of agreement (MoA) that would finally make the compressed natural gas (CNG) available to public transport buses.

This project is meant to supply public transport buses with natural gas produced by the Malampaya Deep Water Gas-to-Power project under the government's natural gas vehicle program.

The supplement to the MoA seeks to finalize the negotiated CNG pricing for the benefit of public transport bus operators.

Signatories, witnesses

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez led the signing of the supplemental agreement together with Chua, Abaya and Pilipinas Shell VP for retail Samuel De Guzman.

Witnessing the ceremony were Pilipinas Shell GM for external affairs Roberto Kanapi, Shell Philippines Exploration B.V. government relations manager Cris Acosta representing the Malampaya Consortium, PNOC Exploration Corp. president Rufino Bomasang and Pilipinas Shell Retail regional sales manager for North Luzon Jojo Gesmundo together with owners and operators of public transport buses and officials and staff from the Department of Energy.

The signing ceremony was held at the DoE compound in Taguig City on Jan. 26.

2bU! to be young • to be you • To be you!

LIFESTYLE

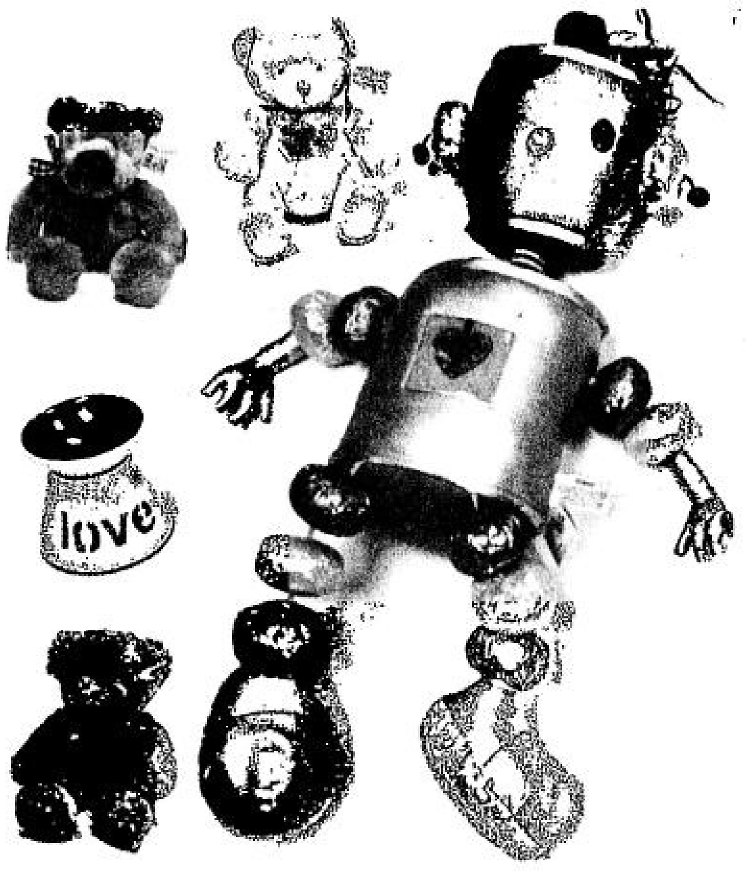
For feedback, e-mail us at lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph
Text us your feedback: Inquirer life name/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**
Chief of Correspondents **Pam Pastor**

DUNKIN' DONUTS
LOVE BITES
P35 lang!
LOVE
LOVE

2BU!'S VALENTINE BLOWOUT PART 2

Valentine catalogue



2bU! joins the whole of romantic humanity in celebrating February as Love Month. Dinners for two, flowers, bears, alternative date suggestions, gifts galore—we've got everything you need to make your love month extra-special. 2bU! waves its magic wand for the second week.

Turn the pages and remember: You can have whatever you see—if you join the Valentine Blowout.

Win prizes for your loved one, win prizes for the two of you, win prizes for your single friends or win some for your parents—we want you to celebrate your relationships in the most beautiful and meaningful ways possible. Because we love you, dear readers, this is our Valentine's Day gift to you. And we have more prizes for you next week..

Settle down with our pages, list down what you want to win and amaze us with your contest entries.

We'll be waiting.

Prizes are just four steps away

Here's how you can win 2bU!'s Valentine Blowout

Step 1: Read all the 2bU! issues in February and pick out which prizes you want to win.

Step 2: You have two options: You can either send us your love story or a creative expression of love (scrapbook pages, greeting cards, poems, a CD of a song you wrote, a webpage—the only limit is your imagination). Or both if you really want to.

Step 3: Include a photo of you and your loved one, your name, age, address, school/office and contact numbers.

Step 4: E-mail your entries to contest2bU@inquirer.com.ph and/or thevalentineblowout@yahoo.com or snail mail them to Philippine Daily Inquirer Building Chino Roces Avenue cor Yague and Mascardo Sts., Makati City. Deadline for entries is Feb. 28. Winners will be announced on this space. Our favorite entries will be published in a future 2bU! issue.

Here's a rundown of prizes you can win

50 gift packs from Wrigley's
30 movie + bowling dates from Eastwood
20 arcade passes from Q Power Station
10 gift packages from Russ
10 watches from Time Depot
10 gift packages from Softspot
10 romantic 3-CD sets from Praise Inc.
10 pairs of gift certificates from Urban Spa
10 one-month memberships to Mojo Gym
9 pairs of his-and-hers Converse Chuck Taylors
8 fragrances from Plains and Prints
6 Banana Peel bags
5 P3,000 gift certificates from Red Box
5 gift certificates from China Star
5 gift certificates from Spam Jam
5 pairs of tickets to the Jars of Clay concerts on March 2
5 Lovapalooza goodie bags from Close-Up
5 pairs of tickets from Enchanted Kingdom
5 P2,000 gift certificate from SM Malls
5 lunches or dinners at Banana Leaf Curry House
5 pairs of shoes from Merrell
5 gift certificates from Coffee Bean and Tea leaf
4 gift packages from Shu Uemura
4 fragrances from Lancôme
3 P5,000 makeovers from Maldita
3 gift packages from Bench
3 gift certificates from Lolo Dad's
3 flower and balloon arrangements from Cest Ca Giftworks
3 lunches or dinners at Moksha
2 sets of 5 movie tickets from Greenbelt 3 Cinemas
2 lunches or dinners at Triple V
2 lunches or dinners at Mingoy's
2 special Valentine cakes from BreadTalk
2 overnight accommodations for 2 at the Holiday Inn Resort Clark Field for mom and dad
1 24-hour date
1 P5,000 shopping spree courtesy of Ayala Malls and INQUIRER's Marketing Department
1 lunch or dinner at Italianni's
1 lunch or dinner at TGIFriday's
1 lunch or dinner at Outback
1 lunch or dinner at Westin Philippine Plaza's longest buffet
1 lunch or dinner at Zucchini's
1 lunch or dinner at Katre
1 hand-painted pendant by Cherie Altea
1 P2,000 gift certificate from And1
1 set of 5 movie tickets from Festival Mall
Books from National Bookstore and Power Books

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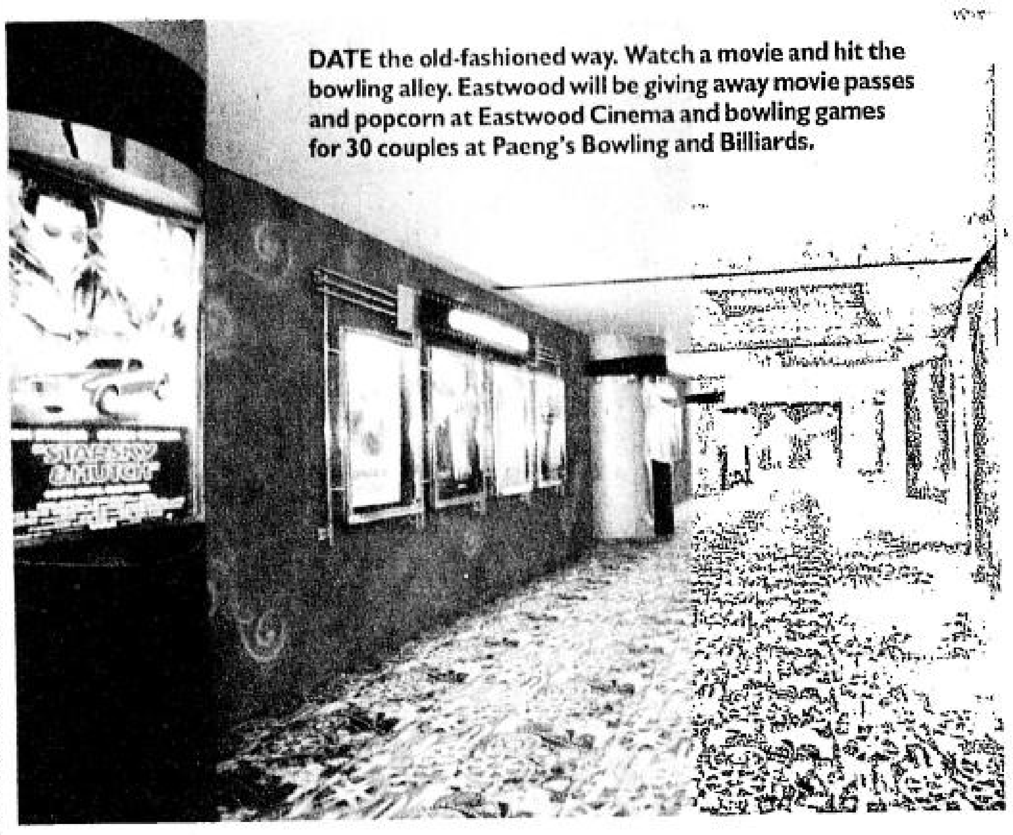
Style Takes Wing in the Year of the Rooster.
Rustan's



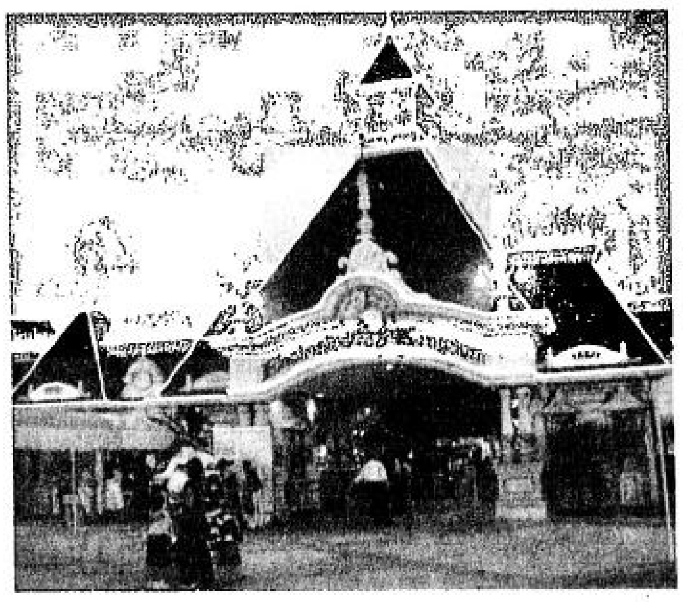
DATE the old-fashioned way. Watch a movie and hit the bowling alley. Eastwood will be giving away movie passes and popcorn at Eastwood Cinema and bowling games for 30 couples at Paeng's Bowling and Billiards.

Power Station

ENGAGE in friendly competition. Just don't get too serious about it. Head over to the arcades and try to beat each other at the different games. Make bets or create consequences to make things more interesting. Q Power Station will be giving away 20 arcade passes worth P200 to 20 couples.

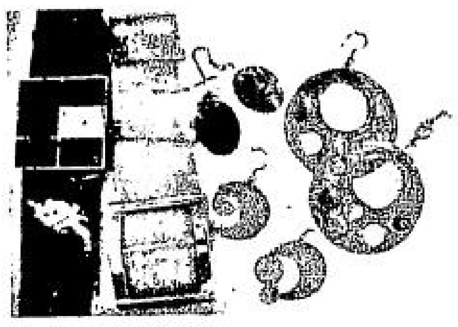
RELEASE your inner child. The amusement park is the best venue for this. Enchanted Kingdom will be closed on Valentine's Day but hey, you've got the rest of the year to enjoy it.

Enchanted Kingdom will be giving away two tickets to five couples. Don't forget to give the Flying Fiesta's new tandem seats. Enchanted Kingdom is open from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Wednesdays to Fridays and 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. For inquiries, call 8436070 or visit www.enchantedkingdom.com.ph.



It's a date!

Traditional dates, one-of-a-kind dates, exciting dates, fun dates, short dates, long dates—we've got dates of all kinds. Choose which date you want and if you win the Valentine Blowout, we'll foot the bill



GO on a shopping spree. What could be more fun than hitting the mall and shopping with your loved one? SM Malls will be giving away P2,000 gift certificates to five lucky couples to be used in SM Department Stores and Toy Kingdom.

BE SPARTNERS. Enjoy his and hers treatments at your favorite spa. Urban Spa will give couples the relaxation they need with the Luxury Polish with Milk Bath for the ladies and the Aromatherapy Massage with Hair Spa for the gentlemen. Call Urban Spa at 6876195 to 96 or text 0917-8918195 for promo details.

Ten couples will receive two P300 gift certificates from Urban Spa, to be enjoyed any day from Mondays to Thursdays except holidays. Urban Spa is at the 5/L Shangri-La Plaza Mall.

BREAK a world record. Close up did it last year, they're doi It again this year. Now is your chance to make history. Clos Up's Lovapalooza Part 2 will t place on Feb. 12 simultaneou at Baywalk Manila, Davao, Ce and Angeles.

Last year, over 5,000 coup all kissed at the same time fo least ten seconds. This year, l see how many lovebirds will leave a mark in the pages of t Guinness Book of World Records.

The goal is a million kisses Your favorite musical acts—Bamboo, Rivermaya, K la, Parokya ni Edgar, Paolo S tos, Jimmy Bondoc, Nina, Ny Volante and Christian Bautista—will be performing the different venues for an ext dose of fun.

Close-up is giving away sh and Lovapalooza goodies to f couples.

JOIN the largest dinner date 12 at SM Megamall with the

A thousand couples will g musical appearances from J finalists. Couples can also pa

The event is open to all wa starts at 10 a.m. at the SM M at 6 p.m.

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lovepalooza

Coffee-Mate's "Perfect Mate. Perfect Date" dinner party will take place on Feb.
pecial appearance of Coffee-Mate couple Alex Compton and Tessa Nieto.
t to enjoy romantic candlelight dinners for two, courtesy of Aurelio's, and live
ya, Zsa Zsa Padilla, MYMP, Barbie's Cradle, Mulatto and Pinoy Pop Superstar
rticipate in the Love Wish and win raffle prizes.
k-in registrants who will come as couples (aged 18 and above). Registration
gamall B Open Parking C so be there early. The opening ceremonies will begin

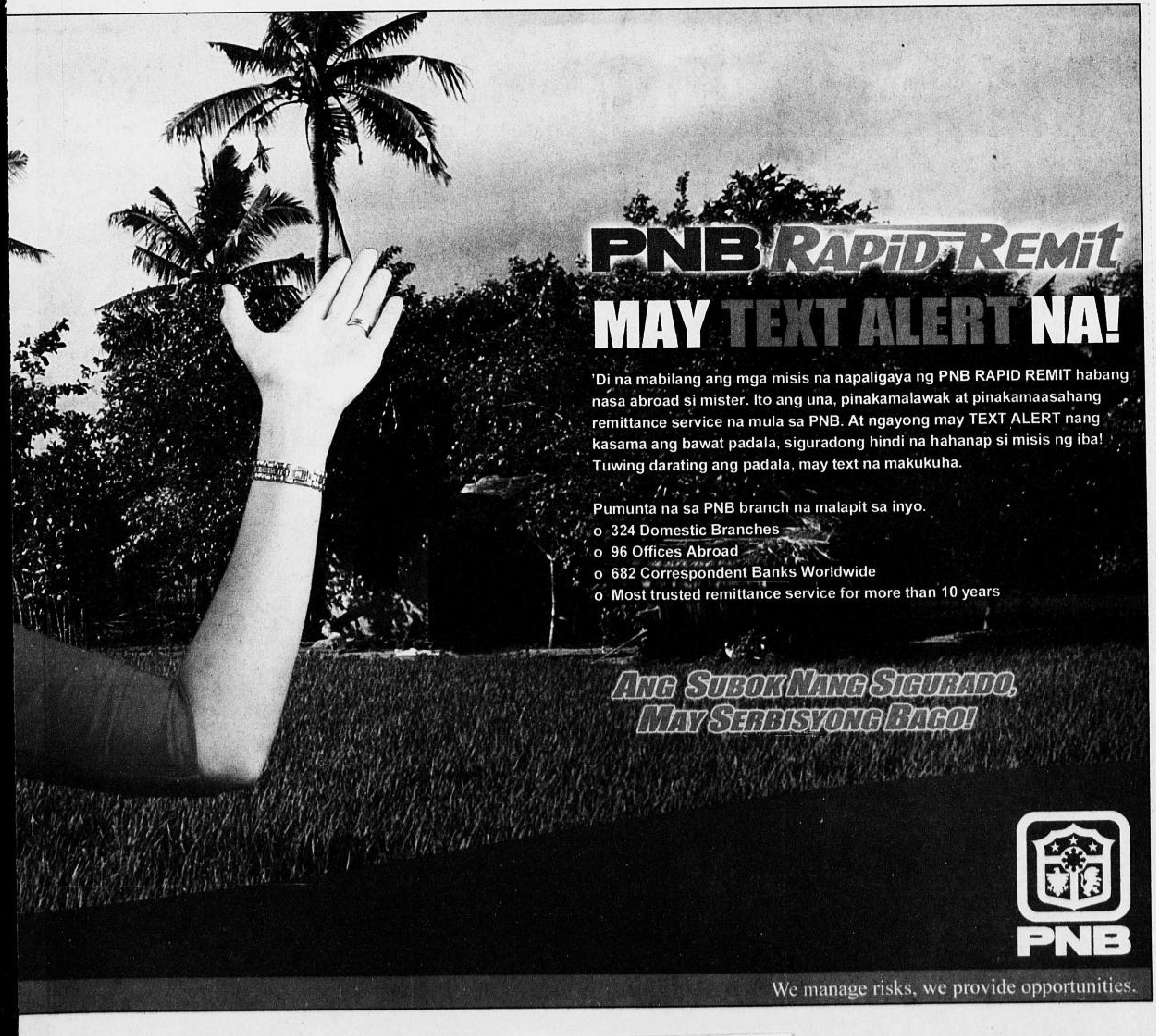
24 hours of love

Enjoy a day of fun and affection

Designer Blooms

BEGIN the day with jogging at Eastwood. Then head over to OJ's Grill for a hearty breakfast. After breakfast, hit Q Power Station and find out who is the arcade champ. Enjoy lunch at Shanghai Bistro. Check out the art exhibit at Eastwood's Citiwalk 2 and sign up for art class. Pretend to head off to the restroom but instead buy surprises for one another. Buy flowers from Designer Blooms for your girl, buy a watch from Time Depot for your guy. Head over to Glorietta and enjoy snacks at Spam Jam while watching a movie. Have dinner at Banana Leaf Curry House at Greenbelt 1 and coffee at Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf at Greenbelt 3. Go up to Redbox for hours of karaoke. Drive to Antipolo and wait for sunrise. When the sun is up, head home.

You can win this day of fun by joining the Valentine Blowout. Check C1 for details.



'Di na mabilang ang mga misis na napaligaya ng PNB RAPID REMIT habang nasa abroad si mister. Ito ang una, pinakamalawak at pinakamaasahang remittance service na mula sa PNB. At ngayong may TEXT ALERT nang kasama ang bawat padala, siguradong hindi na hahanap si misis ng iba! Tuwing darating ang padala, may text na makukuha.

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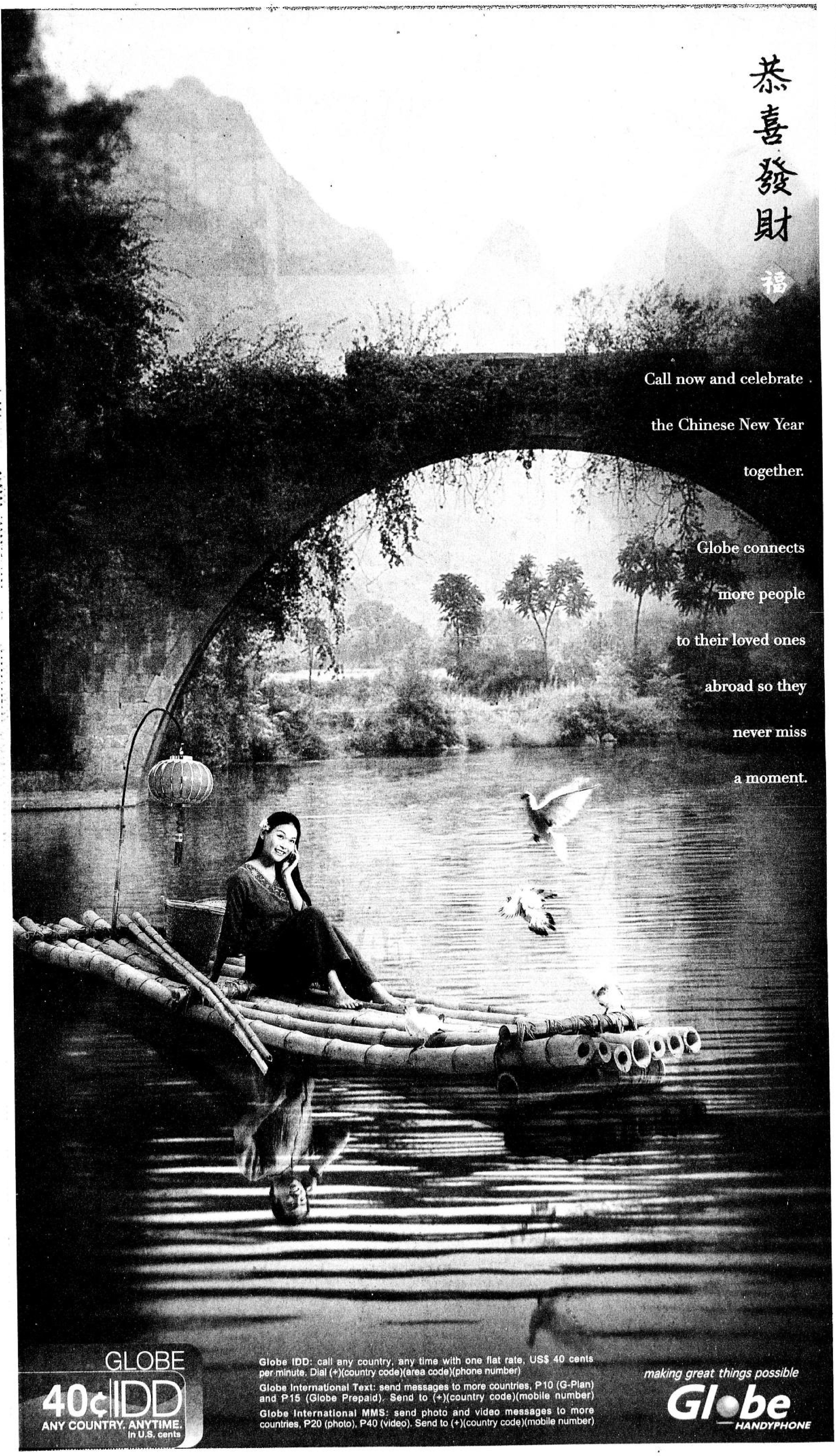

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SALMON and [illegible] Gras Sampler

Celebrate your love at this food haven

By Pam Pastor
Photos by Sara Black

LOLO Dad's is not just a restaurant. It's a love story.

A love story between two chefs who literally met in the kitchen. A love story between a little boy and his passion for mashed potatoes and foie gras. A love story between an ancestral home and a family that wants to preserve it. A love story of the countless couples who choose this place as the backdrop to their beautiful memories—to anniversaries, birthdays and even proposals. A love story between their food and our palate.

This Valentine's Day, Lolo Dad's will not just be celebrating this special day for love, it'll also be marking its fifth anniversary. In the past five years, countless people have enjoyed Lolo Dad's mouth-watering dishes, not minding that the venue is considered a bit out-of-the-way.

"Location is a myth if you have good food," says chef Carminia Ayuyao-Manuel.

CELEBRATE/ D3

UNVEILING THE BRIGHT SIDE OF HAVING A SPECIAL CHILD

Behavioral problems, attention deficiency disorder, dyslexia or developmental delays may afflict your child. But inside is something special just waiting to be discovered.

Learning Together. Lighting the Way.

A workshop seminar will now help you support, nurture, and ultimately bring out the best in special children. Enhancing your relationship with them through love and understanding.

Parents, educators, and specialists will get the chance to...
- update their understanding of differently-abled children
- enhance their parenting skills towards their special child
- network with special child-care professionals, knowledge experts and similarly-concerned individuals

A learning event organized by Reedley International School, Philippines, in alliance with Genesis School for Special Education, Singapore.

Keynote speaker: **MS. LISA BARRON**, Principal Genesis School.

February 18 2005 (Friday)
8am-12nn (Group 1) and 2pm-6pm (Group 2)
For educators, special child-care professionals, guidance counselors and other specialists

February 19,2005 (Saturday)
8am-12nn (Group 1) and 2pm-6pm (Group 2)
For parents with special children

Intercontinental Hotel, Makati City.

Workshop Fee is P3,300.00* per head, or P3,000* each for group of five or more

For reservations or inquiries, please contact Monah Austria or Meg Leyesa at tel. no. 671-3799, mobile no. 0917-824-4337, or email reedley_ris@yahoo.com.

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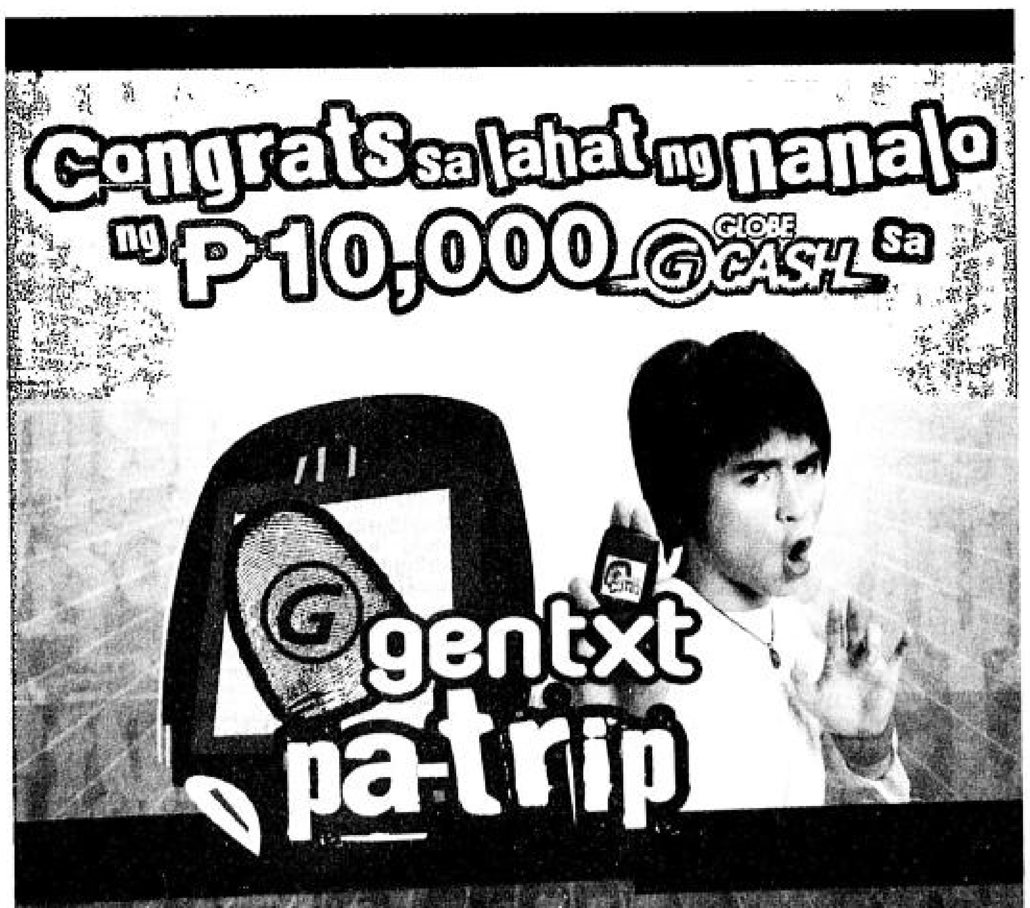

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gentxt pa-trip

Name	Address	Date won
1. Martha Montano	Tandang Sora, Quezon City	Nov 10
2. Jessica Alao	Tunga, Leyte	Nov 11
3. Roylann Buluran	Ortigas, Pasig City	Nov 12
4. Ma. Vina R. Fernandez	Novaliches, Quezon City	Nov 13
5. Ryan Joseph Ballentos	Imus, Cavite	Nov 14
6. Ari Halos	College, Laguna	Nov 15
7. Ma. Jennifer M. Laurel	Kamias, Quezon City	Nov 16
8. Lainie Manquerra	Siniloan, Laguna	Nov 17
9. Christian Caras	Proj. 8, Quezon City	Nov 18
10. Sarah Monique G. Fernando	Legazpi City, Albay	Nov 19
11. Arsenio Y Santos	Caloocan City	Nov 20
12. Edwin Nepunan	Sikap st. Mandaluyong City	Nov 21
13. John Michael Padilla	BF Homes Subdivision, Paranaque City	Nov 22
14. Michelle A. Mendoza	Upper Bicutan, Taguig M.M.	Nov 23
15. Ruperto Ambil II	Brgy. Pinyahan, Quezon City	Nov 24
16. Venus Acero	Pulupandan, Negros Occidental	Nov 25
17. Giselle O. Enanor	Guadalupe Viejo, Makati City	Nov 26
18. Maria Geralyn Garcia	Zabarte Rd. Caloocan City	Nov 27
19. Mary Grace Del Fiero	Novaliches, Quezon City	Nov 28
20. Ana Minela Rada	San Pablo City, Laguna	Nov 29
21. Lourdes T Tupas	Sta. Mesa, Manila	Nov 30
22. Agnes N Cabile	Dasmarinas, Cavite	Dec 1
23. Edward Llena	Caniogan, Pasig City	Dec 2
24. Reggie Maniquis	Proj. 7, Quezon City	Dec 3
25. Ester Paez	Saas Maybunga, Pasig	Dec 4
26. Michelle Martin	Kamias, Quezon City	Dec 5
27. John Paul Kho	Sta Mesa, Manila	Dec 6
28. Ma. Regina Sibal	San Juan, Metro Manila	Dec 7
29. Jacquiline Umali	Meycauyan, Bulacan	Dec 8
30. Armando E Paez	Maybunga, Pasig City	Dec 9
31. Jocelyn Lao	Sta. Cruz, Manila	Dec 10

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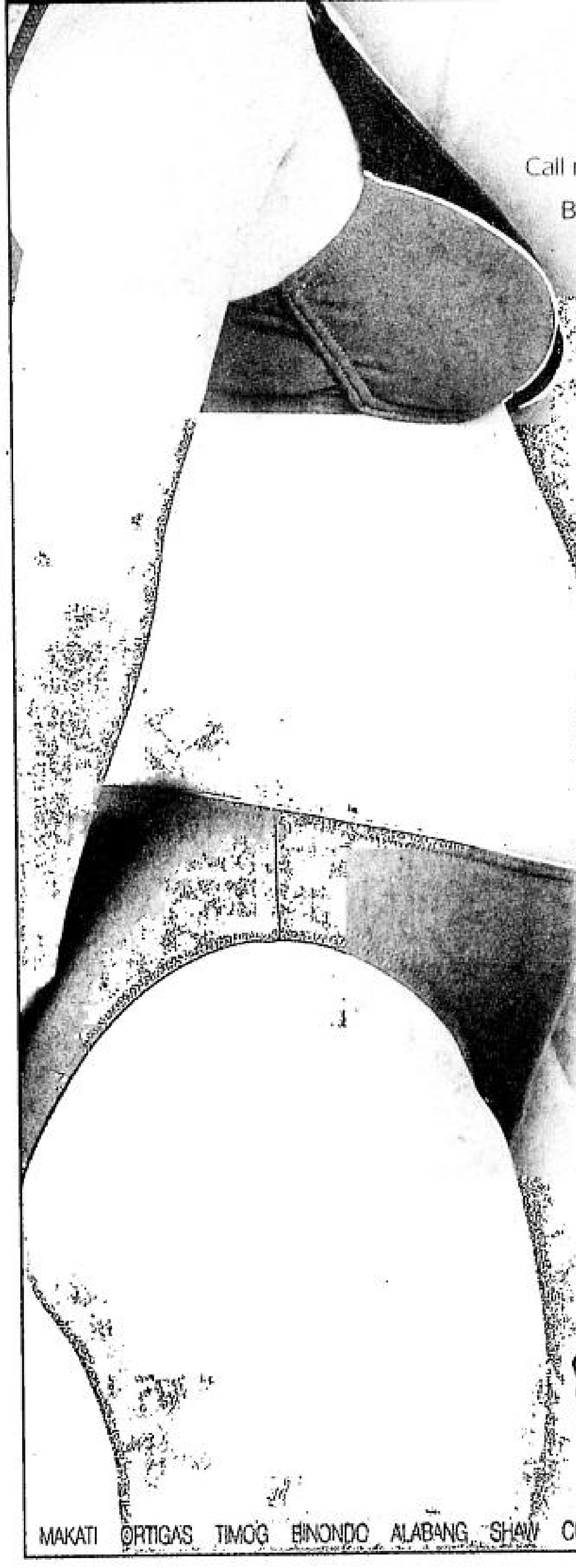

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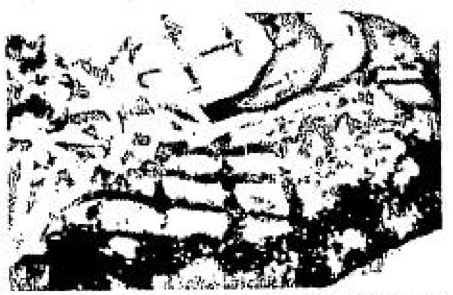
Deliciously in love

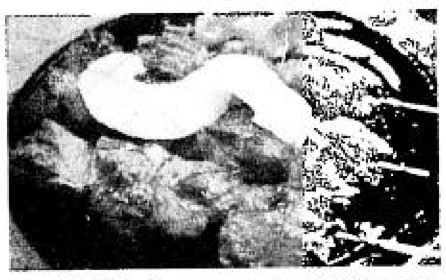
More treats being whipped up by your favorite food stops

WHEN February rolls around, the magicians behind our favorite restaurants break their backs and rack their brains to come up with Valentine specials guaranteed to make the day even more memorable.

Here are just a few:



Italianni's. Enjoy the Grilled NY Striploin with Gorgonzola Butter which comes with grilled vegetables and your choice of Linguini Aglio Olio Pasta, garlic mashed potatoes or rice. Or you can go for the Grilled Prawn Florenza, a feast of fresh large prawns marinated in a citrus vinaigrette and grilled to perfection served with Garlic Cream Sauce, sauteed vegetbales and roasted herb potatoes. Italianni's will be giving away a P1,000 gift certificate to a lucky couple.



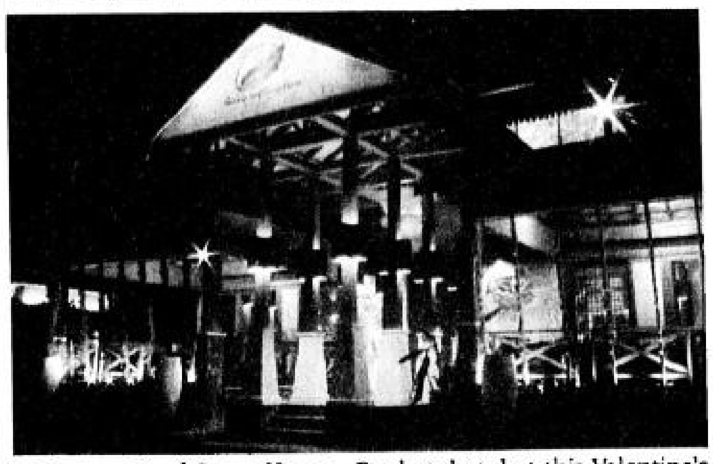
TGIFriday's. Savor the Shrimp Linguine, six pieces of jumbo shrimp with Linguine pasta sauteed with Friday's freshly made marinara sauce topped with parmesan cheese. Try the Steak-on-a-Stick; indulge on beef tenderloin on skewers, marinated and grilled, served with sliced pineapple and butterred vegetables. Friday's will be giving away a P1,000 gift certificate to a lucky couple.

Mingoy's. On Feb. 14, Mingoy's Restaurante will give a free Brownie a la Mode con Toffee to couples who order a minimum of P750 worth of food. This delectable brownie bar topped with vanilla ice cream, streaked with chocolate syrup and served with an all-original Toffee recipe is as sweet as the best relationship in the world. Mingoy's will be giving away gift certificates to two lucky couples.

Westin Philippine Plaza. If you think you're ready for it, hit the country's longest buffet. A couple will get to enjoy this special treat courtesy of Westin Philippine Plaza.

BreadTalk. Strawberry Sweetheart is BreadTalk's Valentine special. This light vanilla sponge and strawberry mousse topped with crystal jelly and fresh strawberries will make you fall in love. BreadTalk has other Valentine specialty cakes—Red Velvet and Tiramisu Moment. Visit BreadTalk at Glorietta 4, Power Plant Mall and Megamall. BreadTalk will be giving away two classic-sized Strawberry Sweetheart cakes.

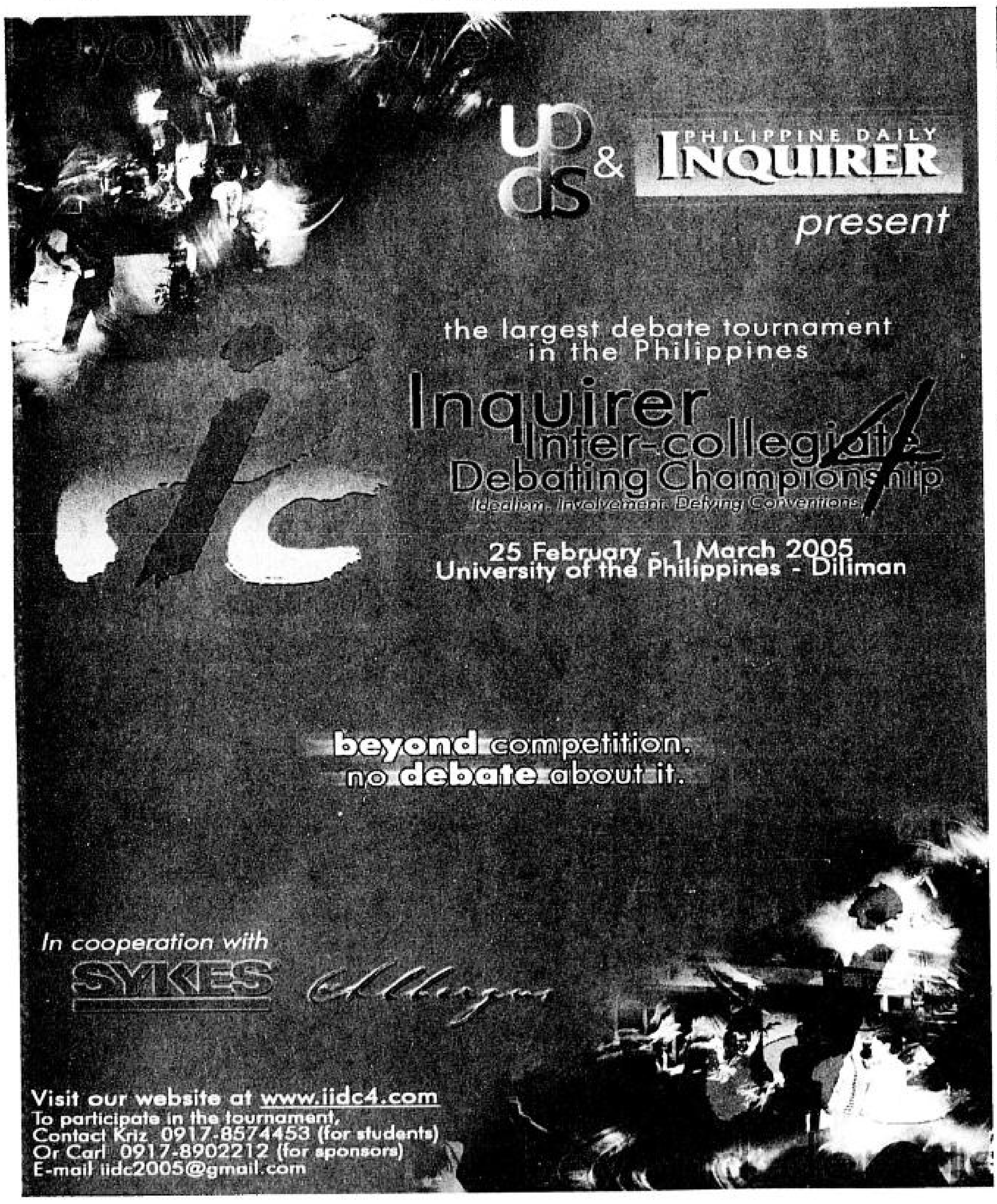
Moksha. Partners Liz Montealegre and Glenn Yap surely have something great in store for lovers this Valentine. Moksha will be giving away P1,000 gift certificates for three couples. Moksha Resto and Bar is at 713 Abad Santos Place corner Wilson St. San Juan, Greenhills. Call 7238314 or 0916-2504592.



Banana Leaf Curry House. Get hot, hot, hot this Valentine's Day. Enjoy the yummy and spicy dishes at Banana Leaf Curry. Banana Leaf Curry will be giving away gift certificates worth P2,000 to five lucky couples.

Outback. You'll love Outback's Prime Minister's Prime, a tempting 12-ounce Angus Prime Rib slow- roasted, grilled over open-flame or seasoned and seared. Outback will be giving away a P1,000 gift certificate to a lucky couple.

Triple V. Who doesn't love the trio of treats that Dad's, Kamayan and Saisaki offer? This Valentine's Day, abandon your diet for just a few hours and indulge in either the mouth-watering buffet or a la carte specials. Triple V will be giving away gift certificates for two lucky couples.



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PAN-SEARED Chilean Seabass in Minted Tamarind Butter Sauce with Wilted Spinach and Rice Roulade

ROASTED Rack of Lamb with Scented Forest Mushrooms and Truffles in Caramelized Port Wine Raisins, Tomato Salsa and Olive Dressing

Zucchini revisited

This restaurant's special Valentine meal is what dreams are made of

ONE OF 2bU!'s favorite restaurants has a special Valentine meal for two.

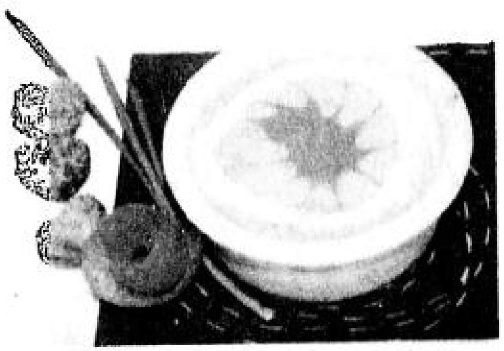
There are times when images speak better than words. Now, we'll let the pictures do the talking. This is a guaranteed feast not only for the eyes but for the palate.

Zucchini's is at 66 Timog Avenue, QC. Call 9250789 or 4155533 for reservations.

A lucky couple will receive a gift certficate from Zucchini's, to be enjoyed after Valentine's day.

JACKFRUIT Toffee Pudding in Pandan Cream Sauce with Ginger Maple Ice Cream and Glazed Dried Blueberries

YELLOW Fin Tuna Ceviche in Lime Sour Orange Ginger and Cilantro



TOMATO, Apple and Celery Cream Soup with Red Wine Croutons and Fresh Chives

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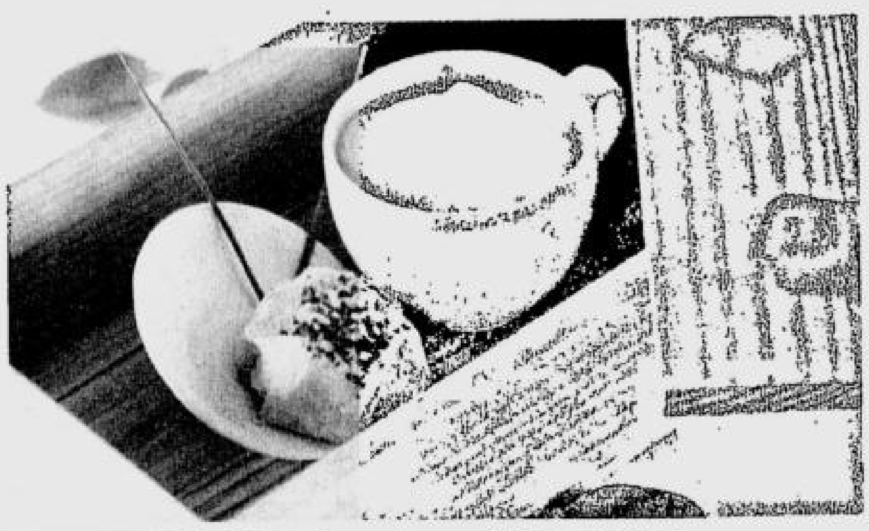
Celebrate your love at this resto

From page D1



ESPRESSO of Main Lobster Cream Soup and Lobster Puff Roll

ROAST Rack of Lamb with Herb Potatoes and Tomato-Garlic Confit

ROAST Rack of Lamb (left); and Espresso of Main Lobster Cream Soup and Lobster Puff Roll (far left)

And good food is what it has. Lolo Dad's is famous for its foie gras (Seared French Moulard Duck Foie Gras with poached pear, highland greens and black vinegar reduction) and lamb (Herb de Provence Crusted Rack of Lamb on blue cheese risotto and forty melted garlic-tomato confit).

Other must-orders are the Romaine Caesar Salad with home smoked Greek Feta cheese and crispy pancetta, Almost-Nicoise Salad (lightly seared fresh big eye tuna, quail eggs, potatoes and kalamata olives over early gathered lettuce) and Steamed Chilean Sea Bass with Light Ginger-Chive Smear in Caviar-Lemon Butter Sauce.

Yes, the menu can get pricey, but food aficionados appreciate that Lolo Dad's serves unforgettable experiences for the palate.

Chef Mia recommends that first-timers begin the meal with the foie gras, the Double Espresso Soup (individual presentation of creamed tomatoes and mushrooms with fleuron) or "All From The Above" ("So they can taste each appetizer," she says).

For the main course, they can choose from the lamb, the pigeon (Crispy Pigeon Leg Confit and Lightly Smoked Pigeon Breast with Mediterranean Fried Rice and Shallot Jus), sea bass or halibut (Fillet of Halibut and Scallops and sautéed Fungi-Open Ravioli with Basil Pesto and Garlic Chips).

They can end the meal with Declension of Mango and Mascarpone Cheese with Caramel Sauce and Pistachio-Green Tea Ice Cream, a memorably delightful dessert, or the Eight Spice Dark Valrhona Chocolate Fondue with Walnut Dough Pop and White Valrhona Chocolate Ice Cream, a dream come true for chocolate lovers.

Special day

Celebrate this special day with Lolo Dad's as Chef Mia and her husband Chef Ariel Manuel whip up a special Valentine treat for couples.

The meal begins with the Salmon and Foie Gras Sampler (Salmon-Foie Gras Terrine, Marinated Salmon-Duck Liver, Seared Salmon-Goose Liver and Apple-Cucumber Gazpacho with Salmon-Foie Gras Crostini), followed by Espresso of Main Lobster Cream Soup and Lobster Puff Roll.

The Smoked Pigeon Breast with Crispy Leg Confit on Macadamia Nut Pesto Risotto is a fusion of delectable textures. Diners can then clear their palate with Lolo Dad's Smoke Belcher's Sherbet.

Then comes the tough choice. Couples would have to choose from the equally irresistible trio of Roast Rack of Lamb, Grilled Beef Tenderloin or Pan Fried Fillet of Seabass, which are all served with Herb Potatoes and Tomato-Garlic Confit.

The meal ends with Grilled Strawberries and Blue Cheese Ice Cream with Balsamic Lacquer and Butter Sponge, Chocolate Truffles and coffee or tea.

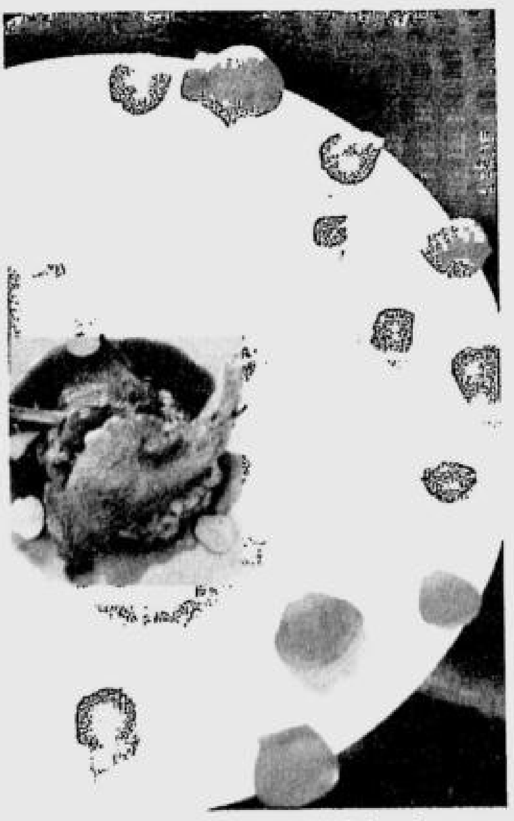
Now that's a romantic dinner to remember.

This Valentine's Day, create your own Lolo Dad's love story.

Lolo Dad's Cafe, which is at 899 Pres. Quirino Ave. corner Leon Guinto St. Malate, is open on Mondays for dinner. On Tuesdays to Saturdays, lunch is served until 2 p.m and last order for dinner is at 9:30. Call 5242295 for reservations and inquiries.

Celebrate your love at Lolo Dad's

2BU! and Lolo Dad's will be giving P2,000 gift certificates to three lucky couples (to be used before or after February 14). See the first page for instructions.



SMOKED Pigeon Breast with Crispy Leg Confit on Macadamia Nut Pesto Risotto is a fusion of delectable textures.

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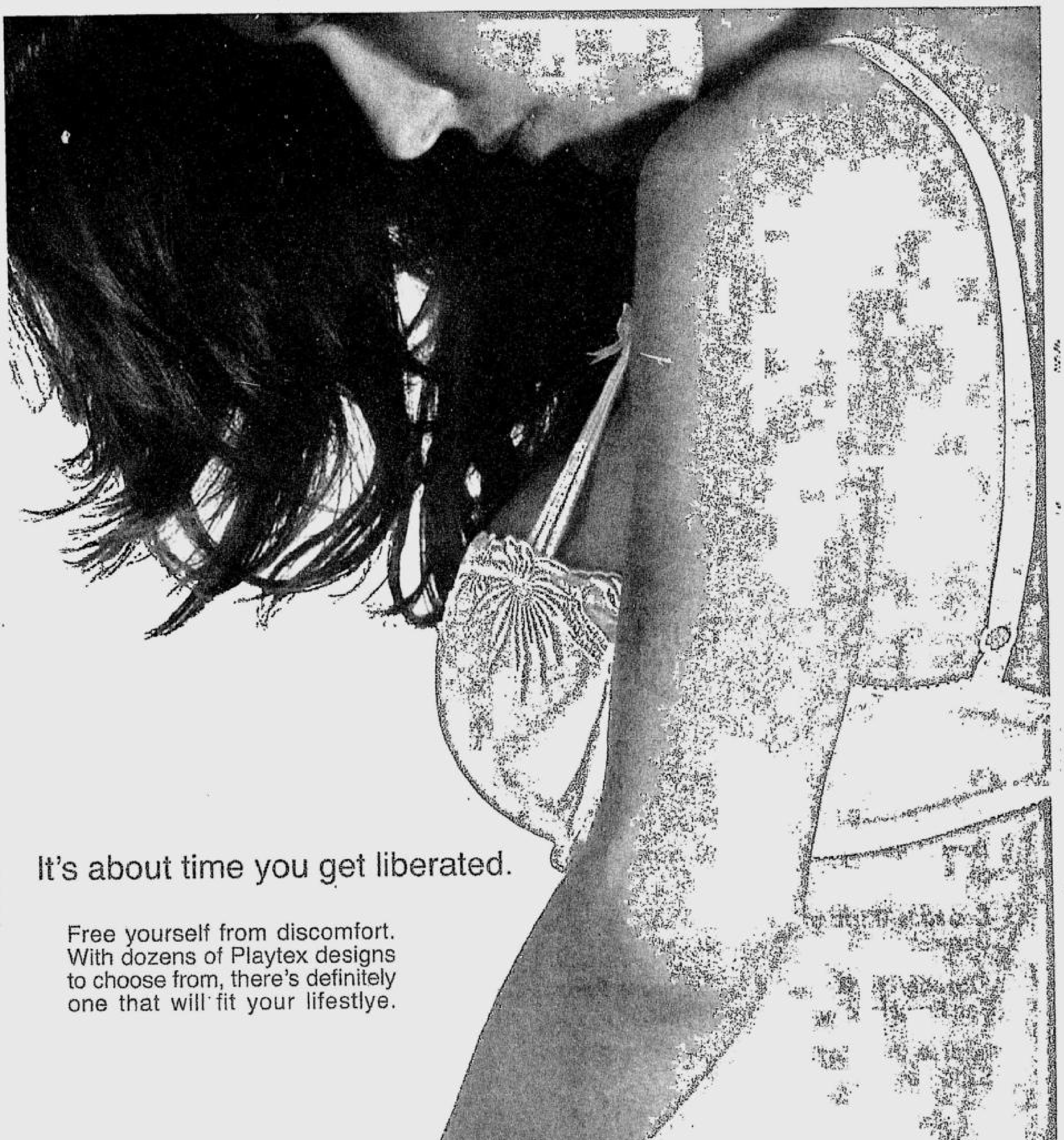

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Love at first page—part one

By Pam Pastor

ALL the other worms will agree—books are excellent companions. They give without expecting anything in return, they are constant, they will not bail on you at the last minute and they stimulate and awaken emotions in countless magical ways.

Celebrate your passion for words this Valentine's day. Here are some page-turners that are worth hours of your devotion.

E-mail the author at ppastor@inquirer.com.ph.

Boy Meets Girl

Meg Cabot

When she's not writing about princesses, Meg Cabot weaves delightful, fun and funny tales that unfold through a series of e-mails, answering machine messages, journal entries, instant messaging and notes written on menus and receipts.

In "Boy Meets Girl," Ida Lopez, The New York Journal's dessert cart operator, is fired for refusing to serve some of the senior staff members. She fights back with a lawsuit and Kate Mackenzie, one of the Human Resources reps and also the heroine of this story, is caught in the crossfire.

Kate and the surprisingly hot lawyer Mitch Hertzog have more than just the lawsuit to deal with. Together, they face the Tyrannical Office Despot, an annoying ex, Skiboy who has a penchant for vodka tonics, swell-headed relatives and a gender-bending sister in an office conflict that turns into an adventure and ultimately, an entertaining love story.

MEG CABOT
BOY MEETS GIRL

SOPHIE KINSELLA
Bestselling author of the fabulously popular Shopaholic series
Can you keep a Secret?

Can You Keep A Secret?

Sophie Kinsella

Temporarily forgetting about the credit card-happy Rebecca Bloomwood is a courageous move on Sophie Kinsella's part. And one that pays off.

Although not as laugh-out-loud funny, "Can You Keep A Secret?" still carries that irresistible Kinsella charm. Emma Corrigan accidentally spills all her secrets to a stranger during what she thought was a doomed flight. Witness horror and hilarity ensue as she realizes that the stranger on the plane is actually her new big boss.

Unlike the books in the "Shopaholic" series, this novel was written with a little more sensitivity and imparts a little more wisdom. There are moments of silliness, yes, but it also boldly deals with family, love, work politics and self-esteem issues. This book doesn't have all the crazy shopping, but it's still a worthy read.

Sam's Letters for Jennifer

James Patterson

Best-selling suspense writer James Patterson temporarily abandons his grisly crime scenes to come up with another heartwarming winner.

"Sam's Letters for Jennifer" is the story of a young woman who, like many of us, needs to swim in the past before finding the courage to face the future. Brought back to her childhood home by unexpected events, Jennifer becomes witness to her grandmother's love story through a series of beautifully written letters.

This is a love story within a love story within a love story. Fresh and quaint, light and moving, real and whimsical, the novel is a celebration of contradictions. Read it and pass it on to someone you love.

Every Boy's Got One

Meg Cabot

I knew I was enjoying this book when I realized that I had been reading it under the table during dinner with my boyfriend and my best friend. I read it in traffic, before going to sleep, and I would have read it while walking if I could.

Jane Harris is on her first trip to Europe to accompany her best friend who is planning to elope. The only fly in her ointment is the presence of Cal Langdon, the best man, who becomes her immediate object of hate. But the unexpected turn of events leave Jane and Cal with no choice but to work together to save their friends' wedding plans.

The book is light and funny—an easy read for lazy days, the perfect companion at the doctor's waiting room, and your best friend during long and boring flights.

His 'N' Hers

Mike Gayle

His first novel "My Legendary Girlfriend," which came out around the time Chick Lit was starting to boom (thanks to "Bridget Jones' Diary"), was a breath of fresh air.

It was also enough to convince me of Mike Gayle's genius. Amidst the whining female voices and the men who try too hard at being macho and likeable and failing miserably, Gayle has managed to maintain balance. His main characters always seem real—they're almost three-dimensional.

Written with his trademark sensitivity, "His 'N' Hers" begins differently. Our hero and heroine have been ex-lovers for three years and have started seeing other people. But they are thrown together again by the death of their cat, and Gayle masterfully relates their history through a series of flashbacks seen through the eyes of both Jim and Alison.

Before you know it, you will be rooting for the two to get together again. Would they? Would they not? It will only take 323 pages for you to find out.

Win these books!

GIVE your loved ones the gift of a good love story this Valentine's day. National Bookstore and PowerBooks will be giving away these titles. Turn to our first page to find out how you can win.

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Melchora Santos Cundangan
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Edna Quillo
Canada

Annalen Galang Mendoza
Milan, Italy

Nicolas Thilo Gabler
Las Vegas, USA

Preliminary Draw Winners:

Winners of ₱100,000:

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Catherine Nival Iñigo
Singapore

October Winner
Arnelia A. Lagman

November Winner
Ellen Sudario
San Francisco, USA

Winners of ₱20,000:

September Winners	October Winners	November Winners
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Belen Y. Mamaril San Francisco, USA	**Felicidad Legarta** London, United Kingdom	**Jevy Villanueva** Saudi Arabia
Jojo U. Pinlac Hong Kong	**Teodorico Asuncion Sumanguid** Rome, Italy	**Natalia Cabatu** Las Vegas, USA
Artemio Magallanes	**Lawrence Nolasco** UAE	**Sayla Banafunsi Maxamed** London, United Kingdom
Harold Viterbo	**Rochelle Abanico Alabastro** Rome, Italy	**Donato A. Gulmatilo** Saudi Arabia

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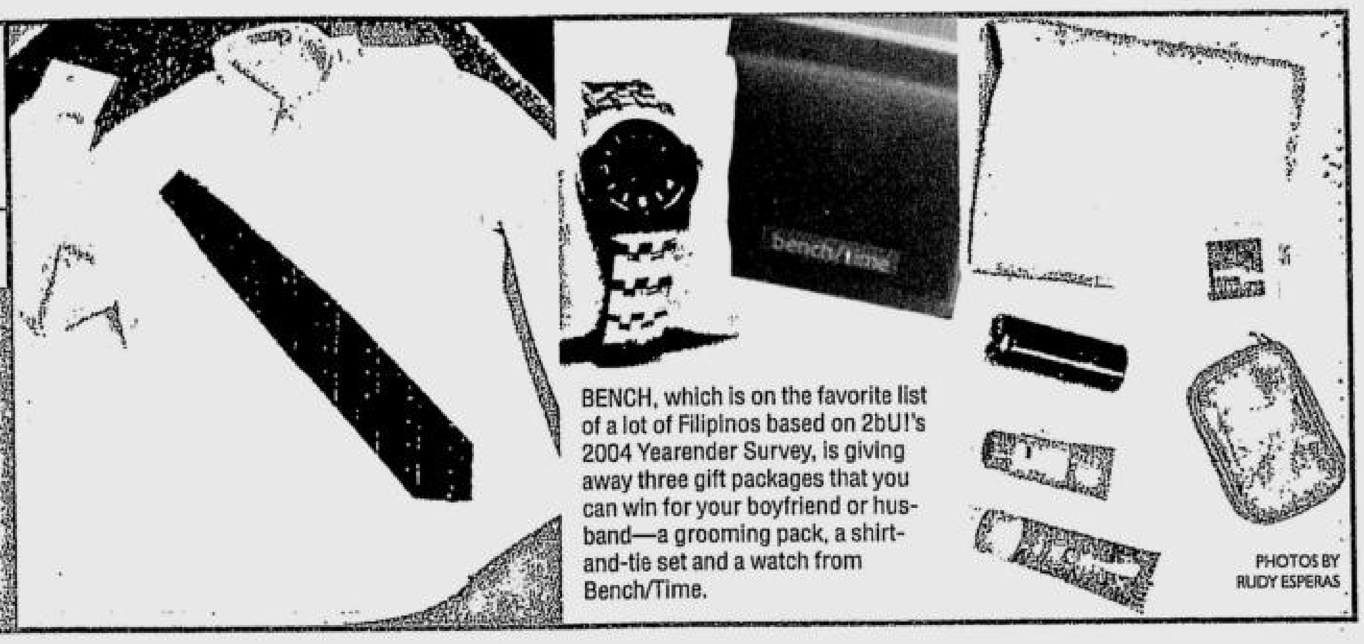
Gifts for him

Your boyfriend will love these goodies

WE know it isn't easy to find the perfect gift for your man. We've given you countless tips in the previous years—pay attention to things he looks for when he's in the mall, take note of his passions, ask his friends to do a little fishing for you.

Here are a few other tips—and another batch of prizes you can win for your boyfriend or husband. Check 2bU!'s page one for instructions on how to join.

His favorite store is a treasure trove of gift ideas. Head over to one, and that will narrow down the selection process immediately.

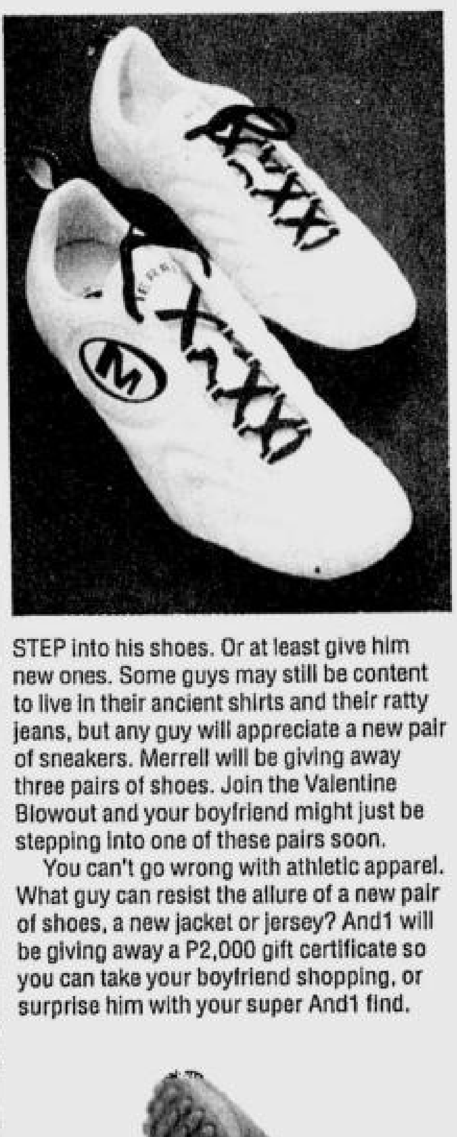


BENCH, which is on the favorite list of a lot of Filipinos based on 2bU!'s 2004 Yearender Survey, is giving away three gift packages that you can win for your boyfriend or husband—a grooming pack, a shirt-and-tie set and a watch from Bench/Time.

PHOTOS BY RUDY ESPERAS

RELEASE his inner gym junkie. So he's been rambling on and on about wanting his own six-pack (and not the kind he can buy from the convenience store). It's time you humored his desire to get into shape. It's just right for you to reciprocate the support he gave you when you were convinced you wanted to be a supermodel.

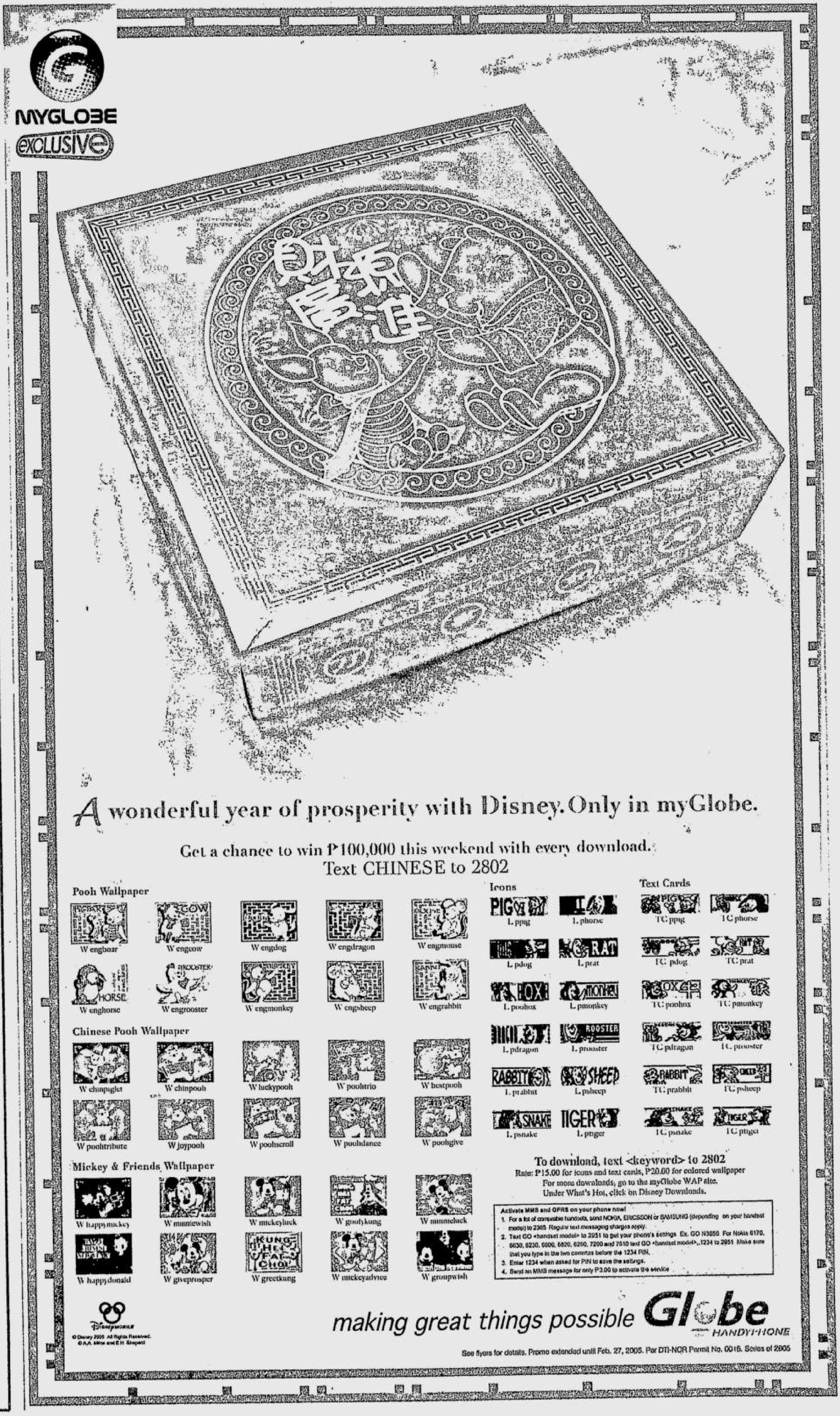
Mojo Gym will be giving away one-month memberships for 10 people—one of them can be your loved one. And when he starts grumbling about his aching muscles, the next best gift you could give is your compassion—and maybe a massage.



STEP into his shoes. Or at least give him new ones. Some guys may still be content to live in their ancient shirts and their ratty jeans, but any guy will appreciate a new pair of sneakers. Merrell will be giving away three pairs of shoes. Join the Valentine Blowout and your boyfriend might just be stepping into one of these pairs soon.

You can't go wrong with athletic apparel. What guy can resist the allure of a new pair of shoes, a new jacket or jersey? And1 will be giving away a P2,000 gift certificate so you can take your boyfriend shopping, or surprise him with your super And1 find.

PHOTOS BY RYAN LIM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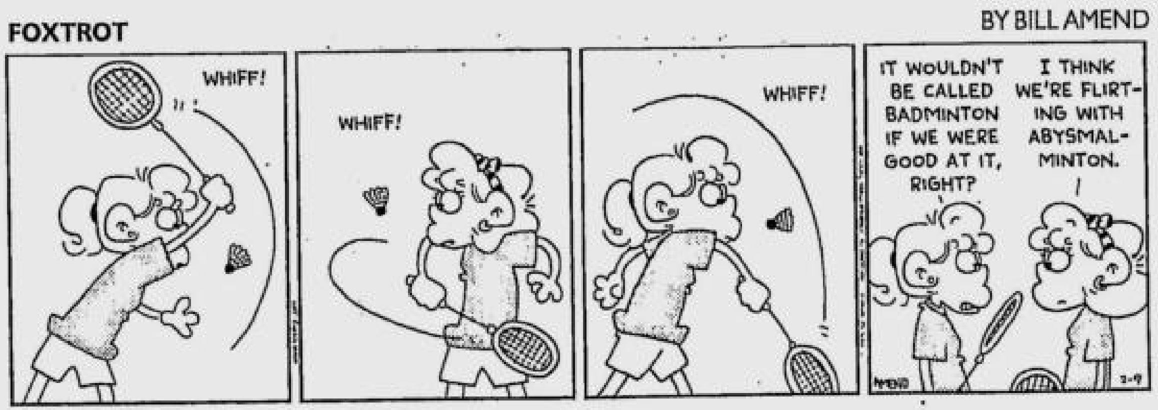
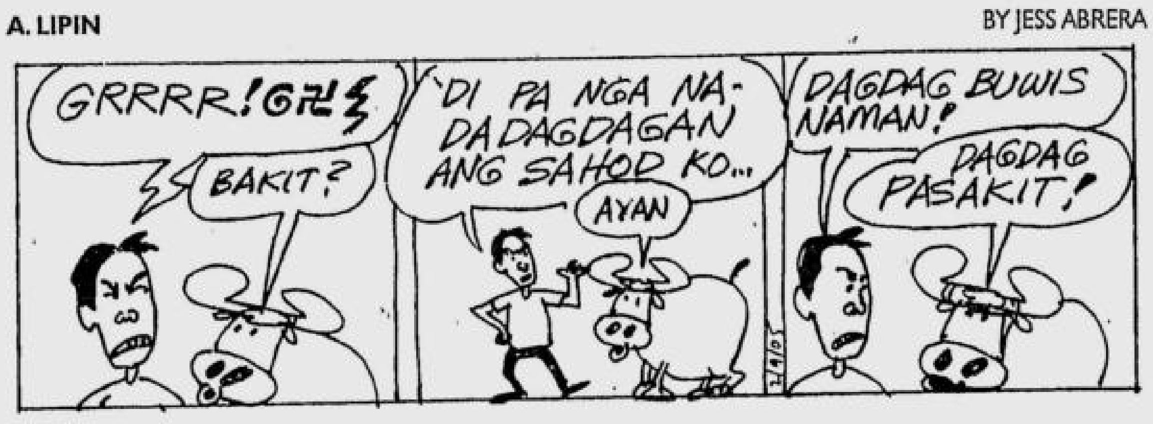
See flyers for details. Promo extended until Feb. 27, 2005. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0015. Series of 2005

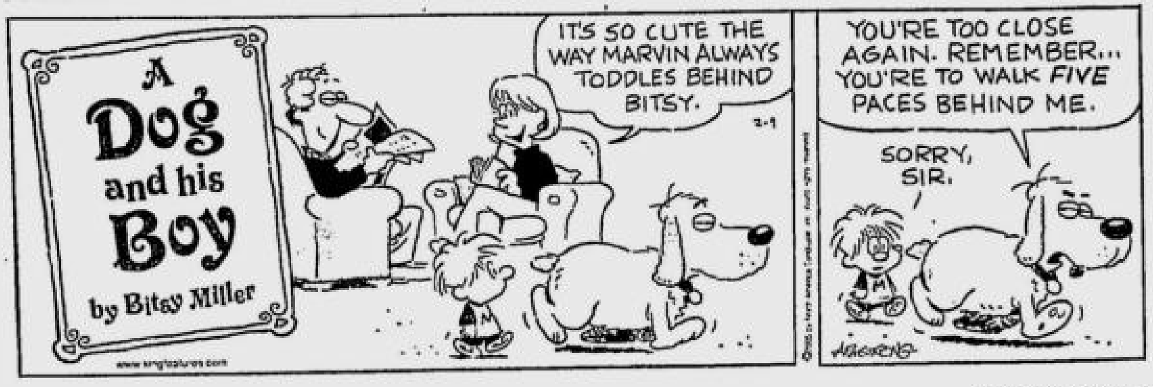
FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND


WHIFF!
WHIFF!
WHIFF!
IT WOULDN'T BE CALLED BADMINTON IF WE WERE GOOD AT IT, RIGHT?
I THINK WE'RE FLIRTING WITH ABYSMAL-MINTON.
AMEND
2-9

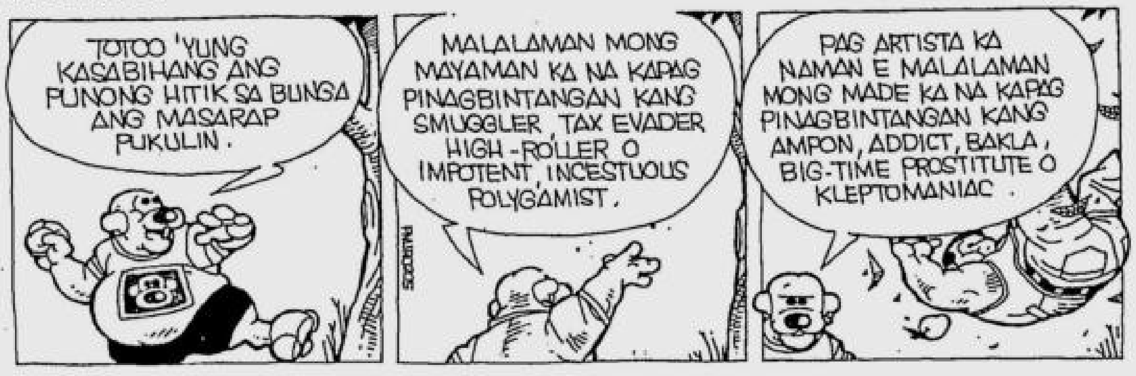
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


GRRRR!
BAKIT?
'DI PA NGA NADADAGDAGAN ANG SAHOD KO...
AYAN
DAGDAG BUWIS NAMAN!
DAGDAG PASAKIT!
2/9/05

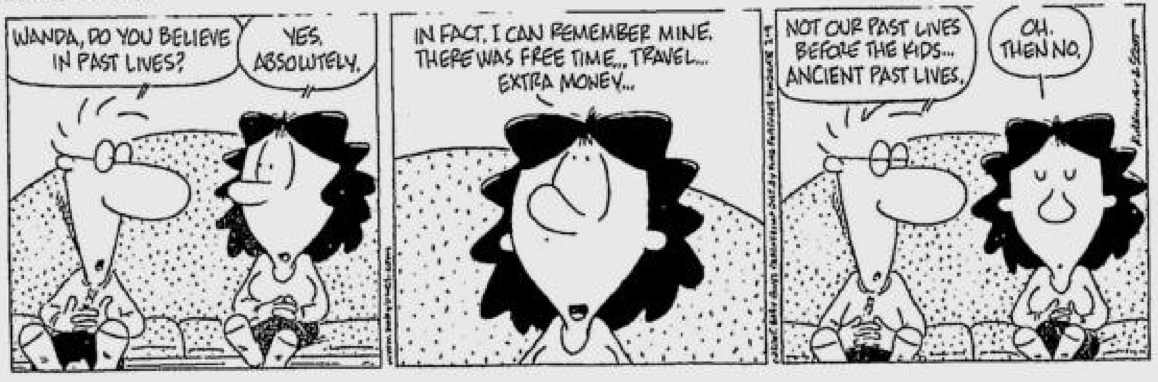
MARVIN BY TOM ARMSTRONG


A Dog and his Boy by Bitsy Miller
IT'S SO CUTE THE WAY MARVIN ALWAYS TODDLES BEHIND BITSY.
2-9
YOU'RE TOO CLOSE AGAIN. REMEMBER... YOU'RE TO WALK FIVE PACES BEHIND ME.
SORRY, SIR.
ARMSTRONG

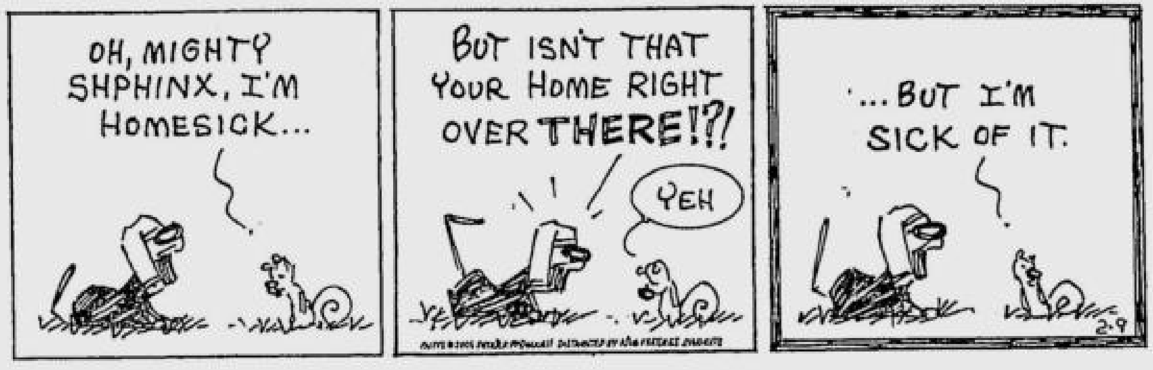
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


TOTOO 'YUNG KASABIHANG ANG PUNONG HITIK SA BUNGA ANG MASARAP PUKULIN.
MALALAMAN MONG MAYAMAN KA NA KAPAG PINAGBINTANGAN KANG SMUGGLER, TAX EVADER HIGH-ROLLER O IMPOTENT, INCESTUOUS POLYGAMIST.
PAG ARTISTA KA NAMAN E MALALAMAN MONG MADE KA NA KAPAG PINAGBINTANGAN KANG AMPON, ADDICT, BAKLA, BIG-TIME PROSTITUTE O KLEPTOMANIAC.
PMJUNIOR

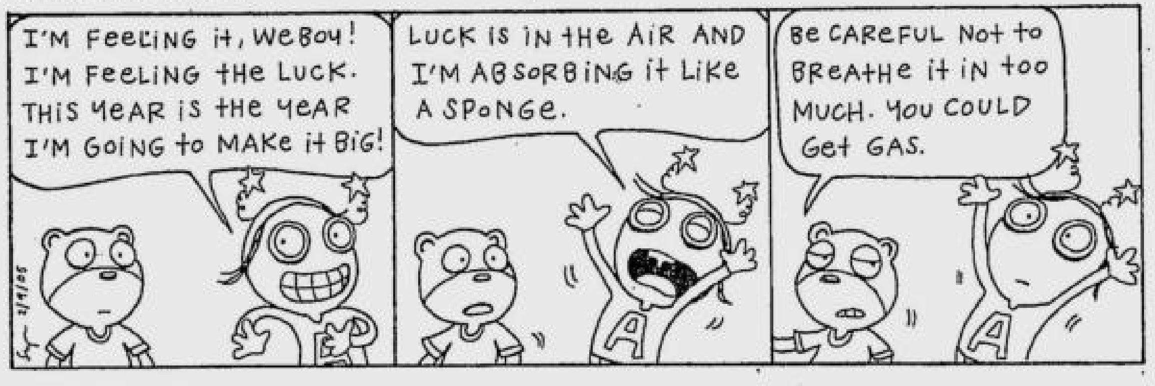
BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


WANDA, DO YOU BELIEVE IN PAST LIVES?
YES, ABSOLUTELY.
IN FACT, I CAN REMEMBER MINE. THERE WAS FREE TIME... TRAVEL... EXTRA MONEY...
NOT OUR PAST LIVES BEFORE THE KIDS... ANCIENT PAST LIVES.
OH. THEN NO.

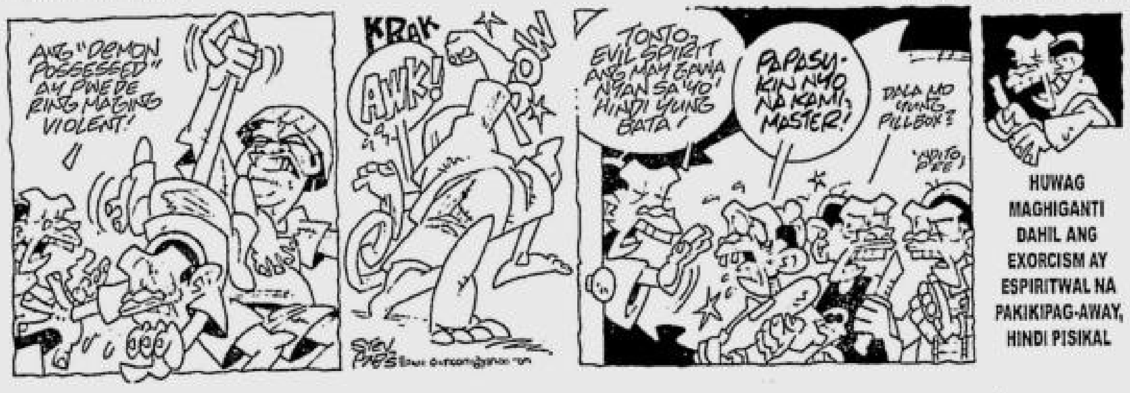
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


OH, MIGHTY SHPHINX, I'M HOMESICK...
BUT ISN'T THAT YOUR HOME RIGHT OVER THERE!?!
YEH
...BUT I'M SICK OF IT.
2-9

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


I'M FEELING IT, WEBOY! I'M FEELING THE LUCK. THIS YEAR IS THE YEAR I'M GOING TO MAKE IT BIG!
LUCK IS IN THE AIR AND I'M ABSORBING IT LIKE A SPONGE.
BE CAREFUL NOT TO BREATHE IT IN TOO MUCH. YOU COULD GET GAS.
2/9/05

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS


ANG "DEMON POSSESSED" AY PWEDE RING MAGING VIOLENT!
KRAK
AWK!
POW
TONTO, EVIL SPIRIT ANG MAY GAWA NYAN SA'YO! HINDI YUNG BATA!
PAPASUKIN NYO NA KAMI, MASTER!
DALA MO YUNG PILLBOX?
'ANDITO, PRE!
HUWAG MAGHIGANTI DAHIL ANG EXORCISM AY ESPIRITWAL NA PAKIKIPAG-AWAY, HINDI PISIKAL
STEV PABS

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're exciting, unusual and certainly memorable! You attempt great things. You're spontaneous, freedom-loving and yet hard-working and productive. You have the ability to inspire others through whatever you do or say. You're definitely compassionate. The year ahead is a time of endings and wrapping things up in order to create space for something new.
Birthdate of: Ziyi Zhang, actress; Mena Suvari, actress; Alice Walker, novelist.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19): This is a good time to think about friendship. A woman once asked a wise teacher how she could have more friends in her life. He replied, "Be friendly."

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): This is a good time to think about your attitude toward authority figures—your parents, your teachers, your boss, etc. You like to be law-abiding and cooperative.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Give some thought to travel, moving to a distant place, returning to school or doing something in publishing and the media. Anything is possible.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): This New Moon offers you a chance to think about how to come to terms with shared property. It's time to tie up loose ends that have been dragging on too long.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): The New Moon this month opposes your sign. That means you have to give extra thought to your relationships with those who are closest to you, especially partners and spouses.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Think about how you can improve your job. Better yet, think about how you can improve your attitude to your job. "If you love what you do, you never have to work a day in your life." (Confucius)

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): This month, your focus is on children, the arts, romance, vacations and entertaining diversions. You like to have a good time. How can you improve these areas in your life?

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Home and family are your focus this month. You want a secure, harmonious, loving situation where you live. "Be the change you want to see in the world." (Mohandas Gandhi)

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Some of you have had difficult relationships with siblings in the past year. Is it maybe time to mend fences?

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You are still in the time of the New Moon. This offers you an opportunity to think about your relationship to your possessions. Do you own them, or do they own you?

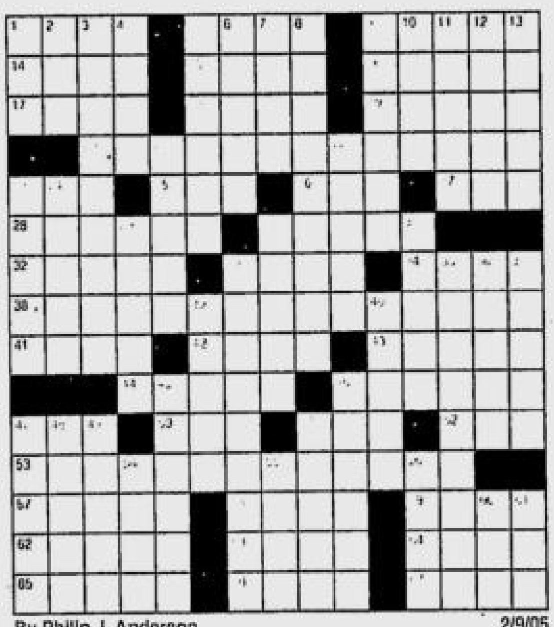
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): It's all about you this month. People and opportunities are attracted to you now! It's OK to put yourself first. It's your turn to recharge your batteries for the rest of the year!

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You need more rest and relaxation. You can't be all things to all people all of the time.

DAILY CROSSWORD

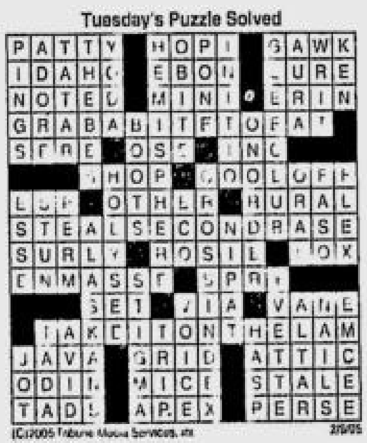
ACROSS
1 Totally absorbed
5 Hefty slice
9 Smith and West
14 Water in Andalusia
15 Chute opener?
16 Pay the piper
17 Braxton or Tennille
18 Roman way
19 Nile port
20 Haberdashery employee?
23 H.S. part
25 Holy smokes!
26 X rating?
27 Poetic piece
28 Grinding teeth
30 Packing containers
32 Slur over
33 Mass of ice
34 Office fill-in
38 Car wash employee?
41 Duncan's dagger
42 Forestry tools
43 Poet Heinrich
44 Leveled
46 Pasturage grass
47 Bern's river
50 Part of MD
51 Cartoonist Keane
52 Seaman's org.
53 Coffee shop employee?
57 Muscat man
58 Sardine containers
59 Distribute the cards
62 Sonata's last movement
63 Came to roost
64 Black-tie affair
65 Fiery crime
66 Author Jaffe
67 Writer Bagnold

DOWN
1 Stool pigeon
2 In the past
3 Climax of a joke
4 Shadow
5 Injures maliciously
6 Wood-shaping machine
7 Song of the LPGA
8 Saloon perches
9 Esoteric
10 College bigwig
11 Pedro's pal
12 Bogged down
13 Shop
21 Fairy-tale monsters
22 Jinxed
23 Mergansers
24 Actor Farrell
29 Venomous snake
30 Remove air from pipes
31 Porkers' digs
33 Very distant guiding light
35 Fond of luxury
36 Restaurant handouts
37 Adjust one's feathers
39 Harassed, as fraternity pledges
40 Young wolf
45 Embryonic sac
46 Spanish holiday
47 Greek marketplace
48 Knight's outfit
49 Colorful mounts
51 Dahomey, today
54 Remove ties
55 Metric wt.
56 Lip
60 "Float like a butterfly" boxer
61 Young Scot



By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR
2/9/05

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved



P	A	T	T	Y	■	H	O	P	I	■	G	A	W	K
I	D	A	H	O	■	E	B	O	N	■	L	U	R	E
N	O	T	E	D	■	M	I	N	I	■	E	R	I	N
G	R	A	B	A	B	I	T	E	T	O	E	A	T	■
S	I	R	E	■	O	S	[illegible]	■	I	N	C	■	■	■
■	■	■	[illegible]	H	O	P	■	C	O	O	L	O	F	F
L	O	P	■	O	T	H	E	R	■	R	U	R	A	L
S	T	E	A	L	S	E	C	O	N	D	B	A	S	E
S	U	R	L	Y	■	H	O	S	I	L	■	[illegible]	O	X
E	N	M	A	S	S	E	■	S	P	R	[illegible]	■	■	■
■	■	■	S	E	T	■	[illegible]	I	A	■	V	A	N	E
■	T	A	K	E	I	T	O	N	T	H	E	L	A	M
J	A	V	A	■	G	R	I	D	■	A	T	T	I	C
O	D	I	N	■	M	I	C	E	■	S	T	A	L	E
T	A	D	[illegible]	■	A	P	E	X	■	P	E	R	S	E

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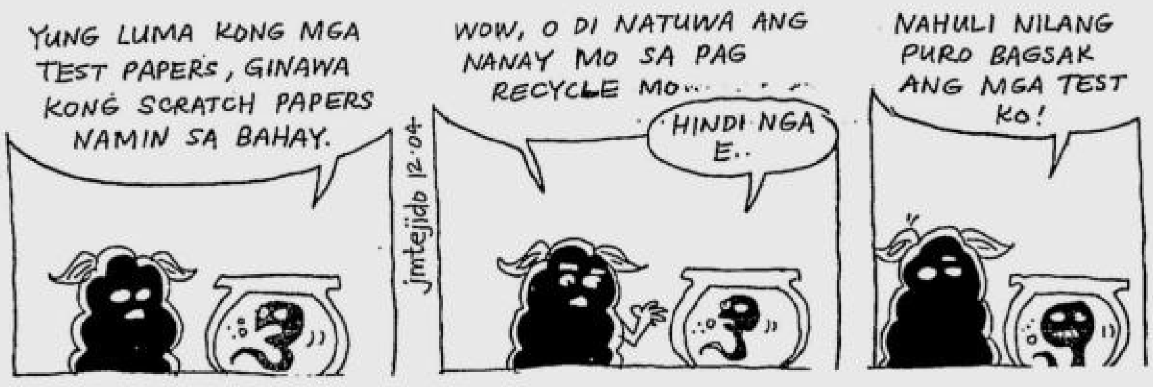
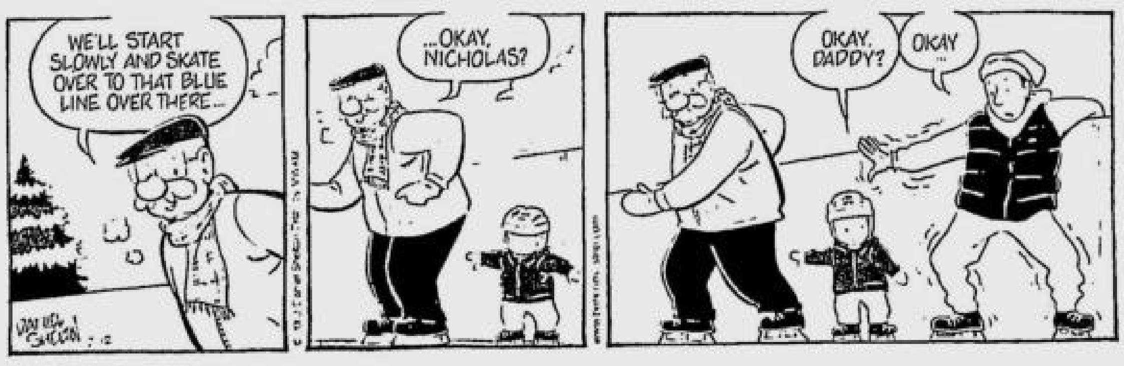
2/8/05

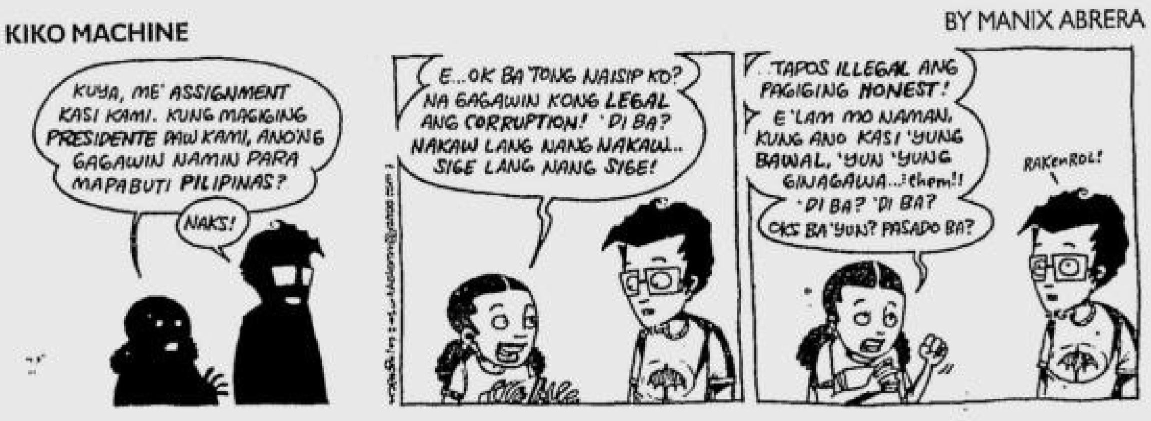
MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


YUNG LUMA KONG MGA TEST PAPERS, GINAWA KONG SCRATCH PAPERS NAMIN SA BAHAY.
jmtejido 12-04
WOW, O DI NATUWA ANG NANAY MO SA PAG RECYCLE MO...
HINDI NGA E..
NAHULI NILANG PURO BAGSAK ANG MGA TEST KO!

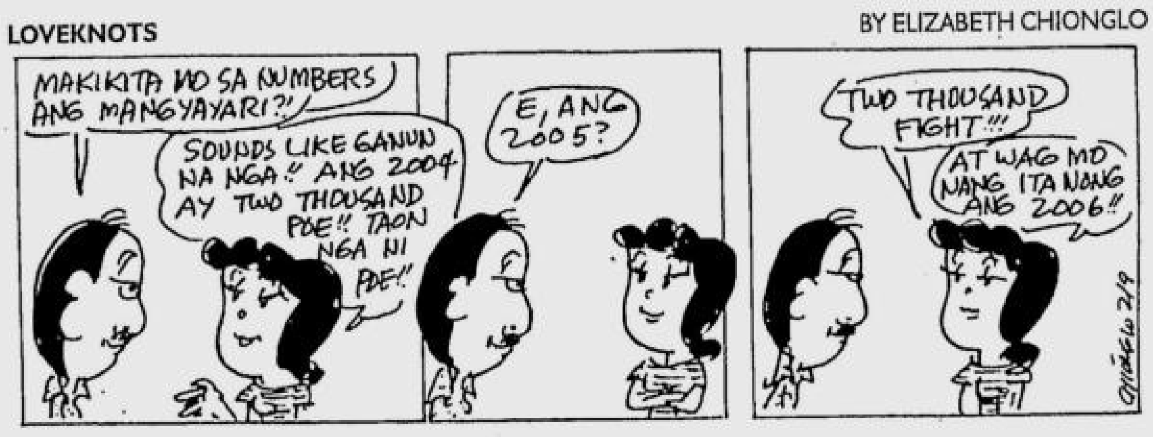
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


WE'LL START SLOWLY AND SKATE OVER TO THAT BLUE LINE OVER THERE...
...OKAY, NICHOLAS?
OKAY, DADDY?
OKAY
DANIEL SHELTON

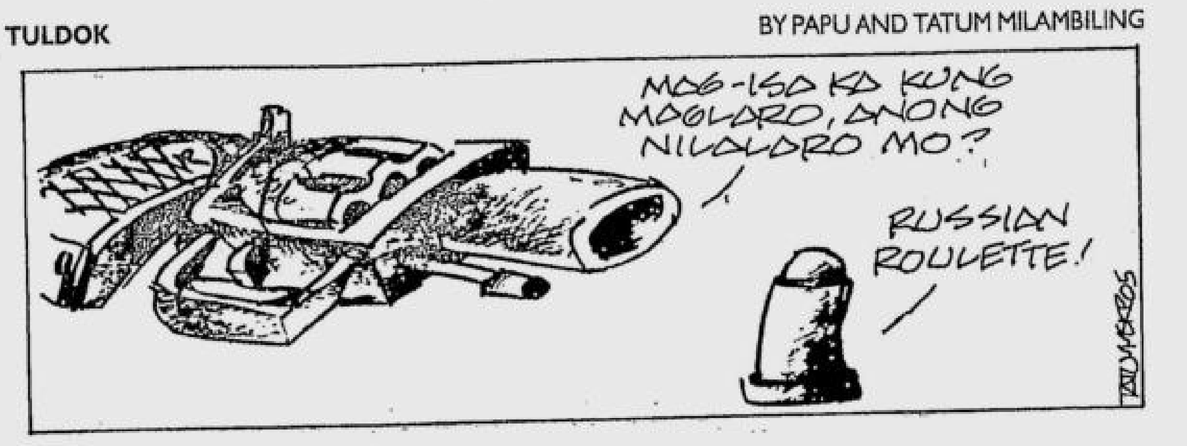
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA

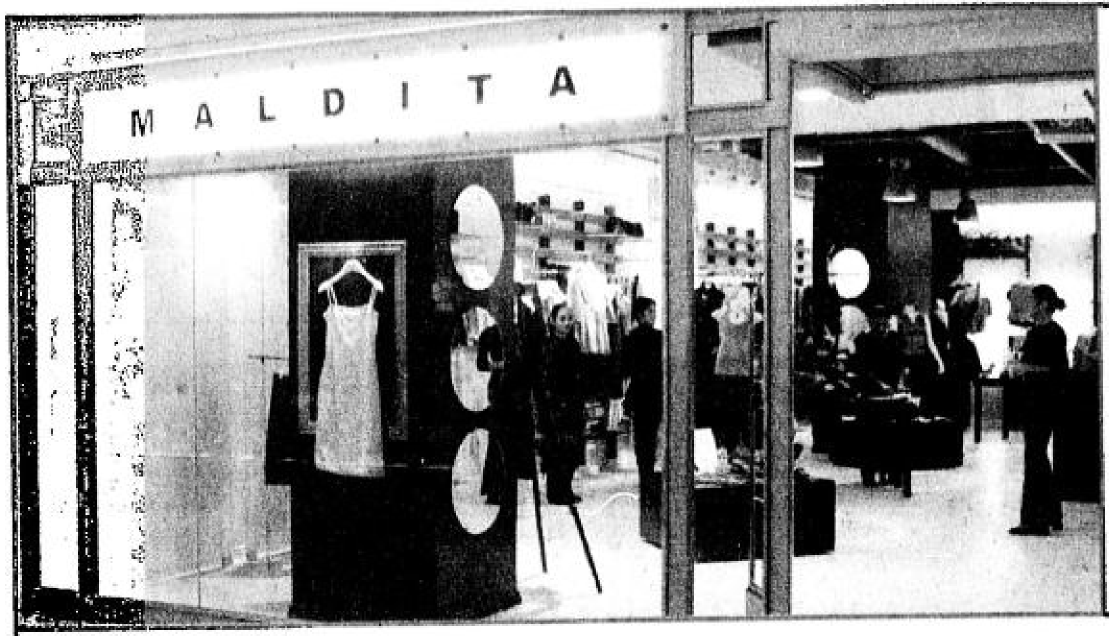

KUYA, ME' ASSIGNMENT KASI KAMI. KUNG MAGIGING PRESIDENTE RAW KAMI, ANONG GAGAWIN NAMIN PARA MAPABUTI PILIPINAS?
NAKS!
E...OK BA 'TONG NAISIP KO? NA GAGAWIN KONG LEGAL ANG CORRUPTION! 'DI BA? NAKAW LANG NANG NAKAW.. SIGE LANG NANG SIGE!
TAPOS ILLEGAL ANG PAGIGING HONEST!
E 'LAM MO NAMAN, KUNG ANO KASI 'YUNG BAWAL, 'YUN 'YUNG GINAGAWA...!ehem!!
'DI BA? 'DI BA? OKS BA 'YUN? PASADO BA?
RAKENROL!

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


MAKIKITA MO SA NUMBERS ANG MANGYAYARI?!
SOUNDS LIKE GANUN NA NGA!! ANG 2004 AY TWO THOUSAND POE!! TAON NGA NI POE!!
E, ANG 2005?
TWO THOUSAND FIGHT!!!
AT WAG MO NANG ITANONG ANG 2006!!
CHIONGLO 2/9

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

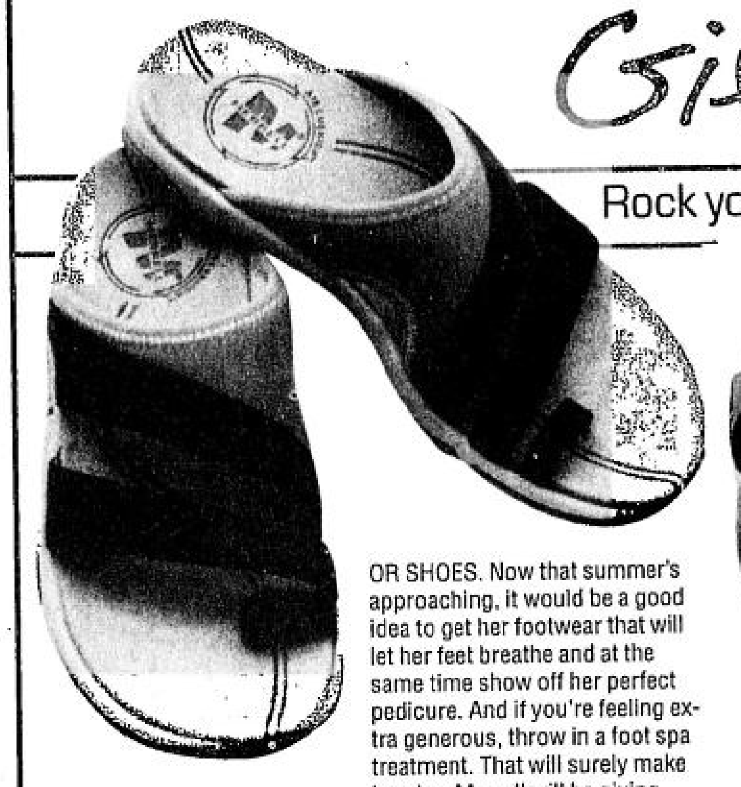

MAG-ISA KA KUNG MAGLARO, ANONG NILALARO MO?
RUSSIAN ROULETTE!
TATUM PAPU



LET her enjoy the magic of a makeover. If she's a fan of "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy" and countless other makeover shows that have invaded TV, and you've heard her wishing for her own makeover, this is the perfect gift. Maldita is giving away three makeovers worth P5,000 each. Stylist Pazzy Navarro will help your girlfriend or wife find clothes that fit her body type and personality well. Explore the local stores. Countless boutiques for women have opened in the past few years. They are definitely a gold mine for great Valentine gifts. Plains and Prints is one of these boutiques. It will be giving away bottles of its new fragrance so four readers can give them to their girlfriends.

Gifts for her

Rock your girl's world with these amazing gifts

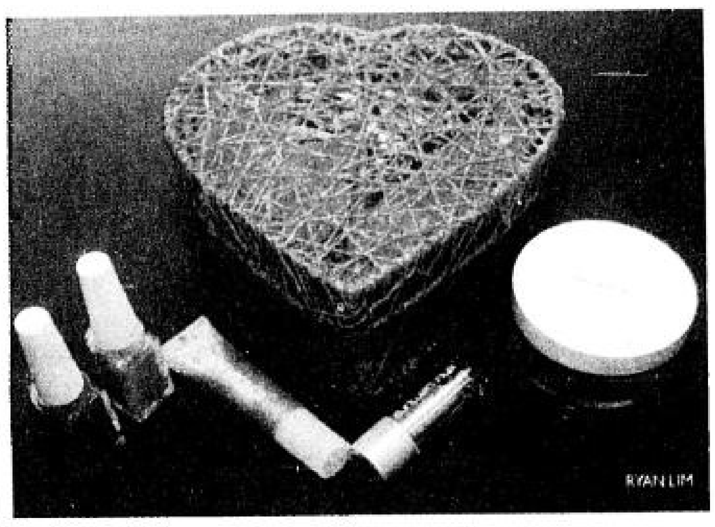


CHOCOLATES, flowers—everyone else will be giving these to his girl this season. Here are gifts that will definitely stand out. And you can win them all.

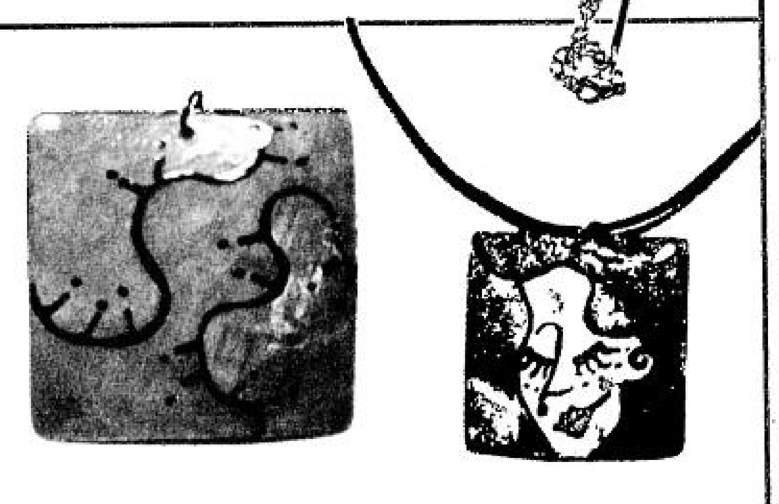
Turn to page C1 to find out how.

OR SHOES. Now that summer's approaching, it would be a good idea to get her footwear that will let her feet breathe and at the same time show off her perfect pedicure. And if you're feeling extra generous, throw in a foot spa treatment. That will surely make her day. Merrell will be giving away two pairs of ultra-comfy women's sandals.

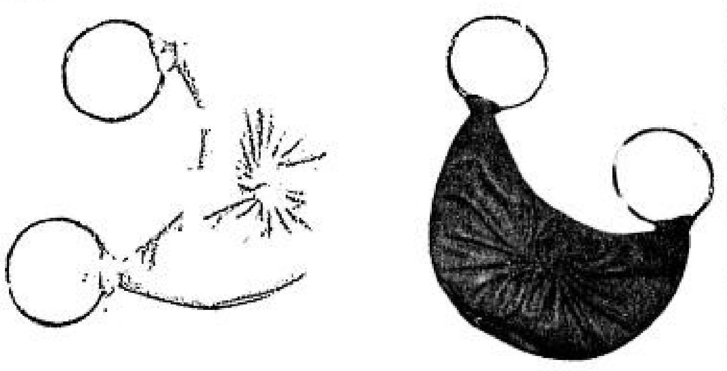
PHOTOS: RYAN LIM


RYAN LIM

GIVE her a dose of glamour and pampering. She has so many little beauty jars, bottles and sprays and you wonder how she could need them all. You wonder, too, if one of them is a magic potion. Understand that women love pampering themselves as much as you love taking care of your car. This Valentine, let her indulge in an extra dose of pampering, thanks to you. Shu Uemura will be giving away two Valentine kits and two pamper packs that four readers can win for their loved ones. You could be one of them. Winning is just an e-mail away.



GENERIC is the enemy. One-of-a-kind gifts hit the mark, like Cherie Altea's hand-painted pendants. She produces only a limited number of them. There is a tiny chance of your girlfriend bumping into someone else wearing the same pendant. Win this special hand-painted pendant made by Cherie Altea and surprise your loved one with it. To place your own orders, call Cherie at 0917-6230469.



REALIZE that a girl can never have too many bags. So what if you think your girl already has bags in all possible shades of the rainbow? Banana Peel, a company we love for its ultra-colorful and ultra-affordable flip flops, has launched its own line of fun and functional bags. Win one of six bags from Banana Peel's new collection. You may also buy the bags from Banana Peel at Market! Market!

miracle
LANCÔME
RUDY ESPERAS

SOME gifts are heaven scent. Perfumes and fragrances are classy, traditional gifts that never seem to lose their edge. Lancome has three to choose from—Attraction (a floral and woody perfume which is a blend of iris and patchouli), Miracle (a sparkling fragrance that combines lychee, freesia, magnolia, jasmine, amber and musk) and the newest, Miracle So Magic (a fresh, vibrant, luscious fragrance which brings together fresh clover leaf, wild rose and narcissus). Lancôme will be giving away two 30 ml bottles of Attraction (worth P2,950 each) and two 30ml bottles of Miracle (worth P2,795 each) This gift is a double-edged sword. After all, you love it when she smells really, really good, right?

Gifts for him

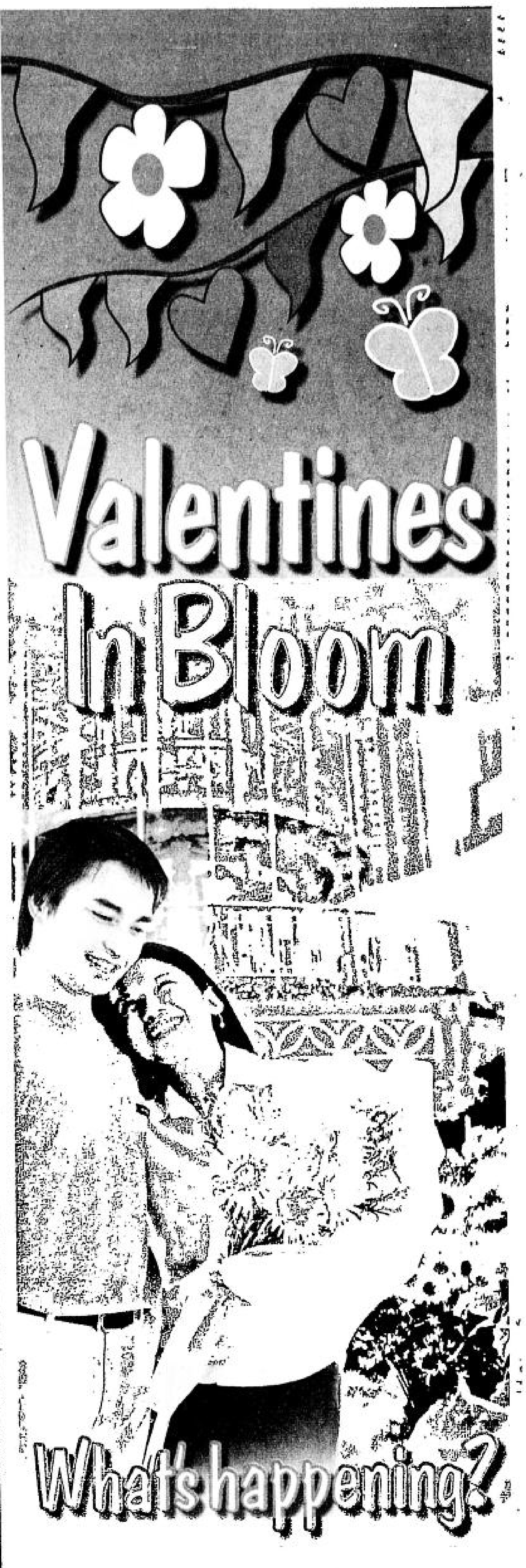
From page E1

CASIO
EDIFICE
CASIO
Edifice 4

Home
2.86
10:39
SUUNTO X9

GIVE him quality time. And by quality time we mean two things—your attention and a good watch. Time Depot will give 10 readers watches they can surprise their boyfriends and husbands with this Valentine.

NAUTICA
200M/660FT
NAUTICA


Valentine's In Bloom

What's happening?

VALENTINE TREAT FOR 2
at Chef's Avenue
Treat your loved ones to a romantic evening of love songs as you enjoy a choice of Filipino, Thai, Japanese or Chinese cuisine on **February 12, 2005** at Chef's Avenue. Get a chance to win romantic prizes for 2 with a minimum P1,000 single or accumulated purchase from any participating restaurant from February 11-14, 2005.
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A2-061 Series of 2005.

HEART DELIGHTS
at C-SQUARE
Get a chance to pick an instant prize with a minimum P100 single or accumulated purchase from any C-Square tenant.
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A2-080 Series of 2005.

LOVE LITES
at FOOD JUNCTION
Enjoy your favorite budget meal in a unique candle lit dining set up at the newly renovated Food Junction on February 13 & 14. Plus get a chance to win exciting premium items from Coca-Cola with a minimum P50 single or accumulated food purchase plus any 16 oz. Coca-Cola product from February 11 - April 10, 2005.
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A2-[illegible] Series of 2005.

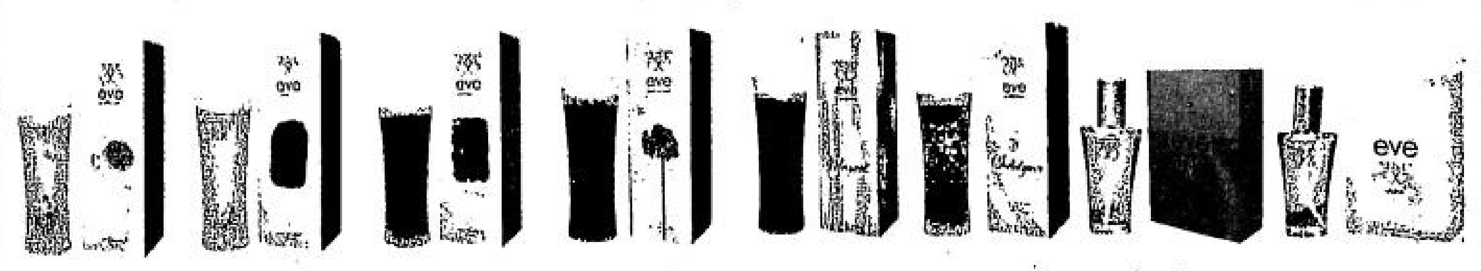
FLOWER POWER
<LOVE MONTH>
This love month of February, flowers take precedence over any other major item as a major gift currency. Take your pick from a variety of options at the 2nd level Carousel Court from February 11-28, 2005.

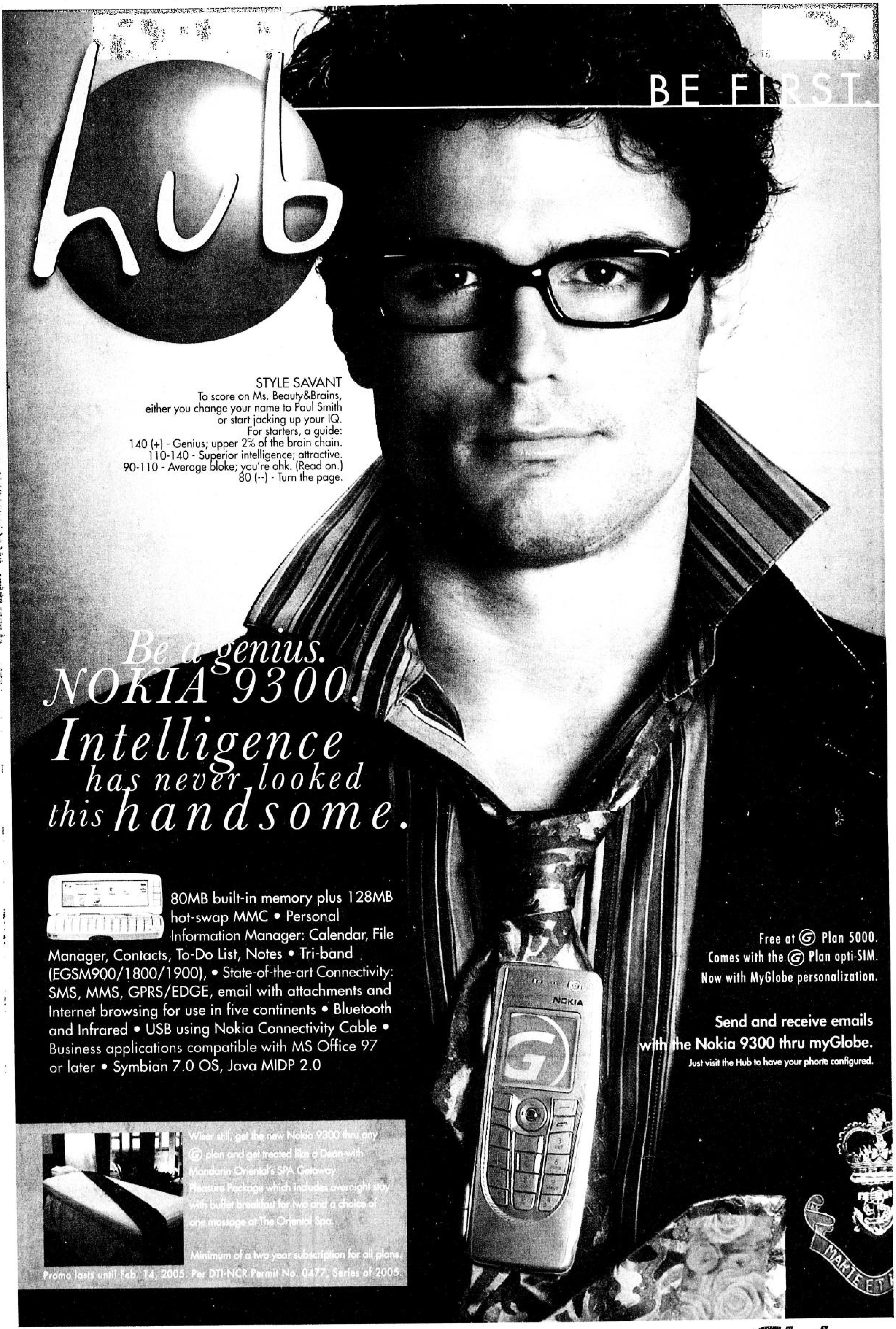
LIKE A FESTIVAL OF MALLS ONLY AT
FESTIVAL SUPERMALL
FILINVEST-ALABANG
FILINVEST
INVEST ON SOLID GROUND
Call Customer Service at 850-3614 or visit website www.festivalsupermall.com

Gifts for her

From page E3

EXPLORE the local stores. Countless boutiques for women have opened in the past few years—they are definitely a gold mine for great Valentine gifts. Plains and Prints is one of these boutiques. They will be giving away bottles of their new fragrance so four readers can give them to their girlfriends. Eve Fragrances are available nationwide in all Plains and Prints outlet. For queries, you may visit www.plainsandprints.com or call 3726190 to 92





STYLE SAVANT

To score on Ms. Beauty&Brains,
either you change your name to Paul Smith
or start jacking up your IQ.
For starters, a guide:
140 (+) - Genius; upper 2% of the brain chain.
110-140 - Superior intelligence; attractive.
90-110 - Average bloke; you're ohk. (Read on.)
80 (--) - Turn the page.

Be a genius.
NOKIA 9300.
Intelligence has never looked this handsome.

80MB built-in memory plus 128MB hot-swap MMC • Personal Information Manager: Calendar, File Manager, Contacts, To-Do List, Notes • Tri-band (EGSM900/1800/1900), • State-of-the-art Connectivity: SMS, MMS, GPRS/EDGE, email with attachments and Internet browsing for use in five continents • Bluetooth and Infrared • USB using Nokia Connectivity Cable • Business applications compatible with MS Office 97 or later • Symbian 7.0 OS, Java MIDP 2.0

Wiser still, get the new Nokia 9300 thru any G plan and get treated like a Dean with Mandarin Oriental's SPA Getaway Pleasure Package which includes overnight stay with buffet breakfast for two and a choice of one massage at The Oriental Spa.

Minimum of a two year subscription for all plans.

Promo lasts until Feb. 14, 2005. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0477, Series of 2005.

Free at G Plan 5000.
Comes with the G Plan opti-SIM.
Now with MyGlobe personalization.

Send and receive emails with the Nokia 9300 thru myGlobe.

Just visit the Hub to have your phone configured.

Rockwell. Greenbelt. Glorietta. The Podium. Greenhills. www.hub-eshop.com

NOKIA CONNECTING PEOPLE Globe HANDYPHONE

For feedback, e-mail us at lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph
Text us your feedback: Inquirer life name/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart),

LIFESTYLE

Presents perfect

Here are more treats for starry-eyed couples to enjoy

PHOTOS BY RUDY ESPERAS AND RYAN LIM

Happy Valentine's Day!

DELICATE love P2,000

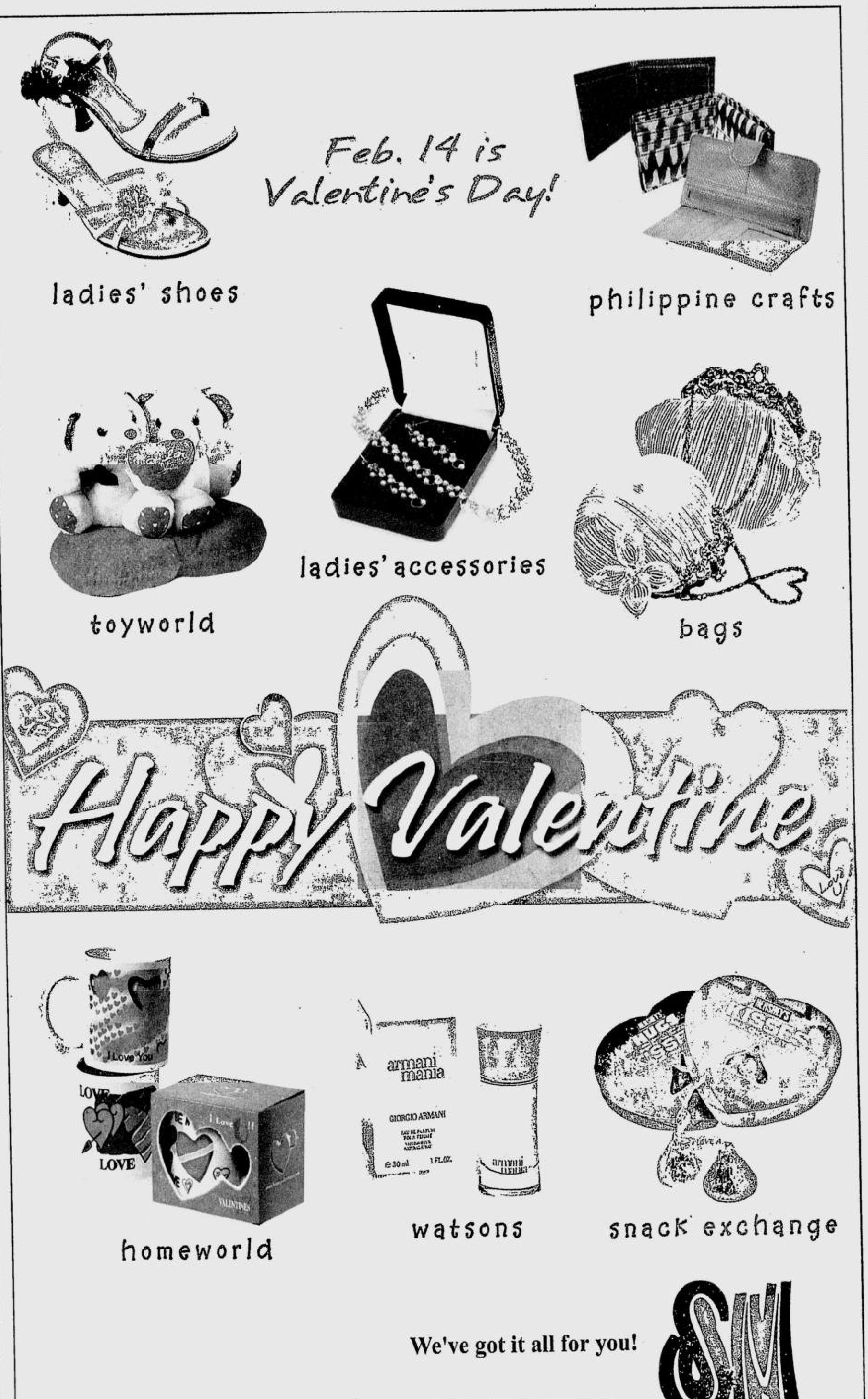
Say it with flowers—and balloons. C'est Ca Giftworks will be giving away three beautiful flower and balloon arrangements for three couples.

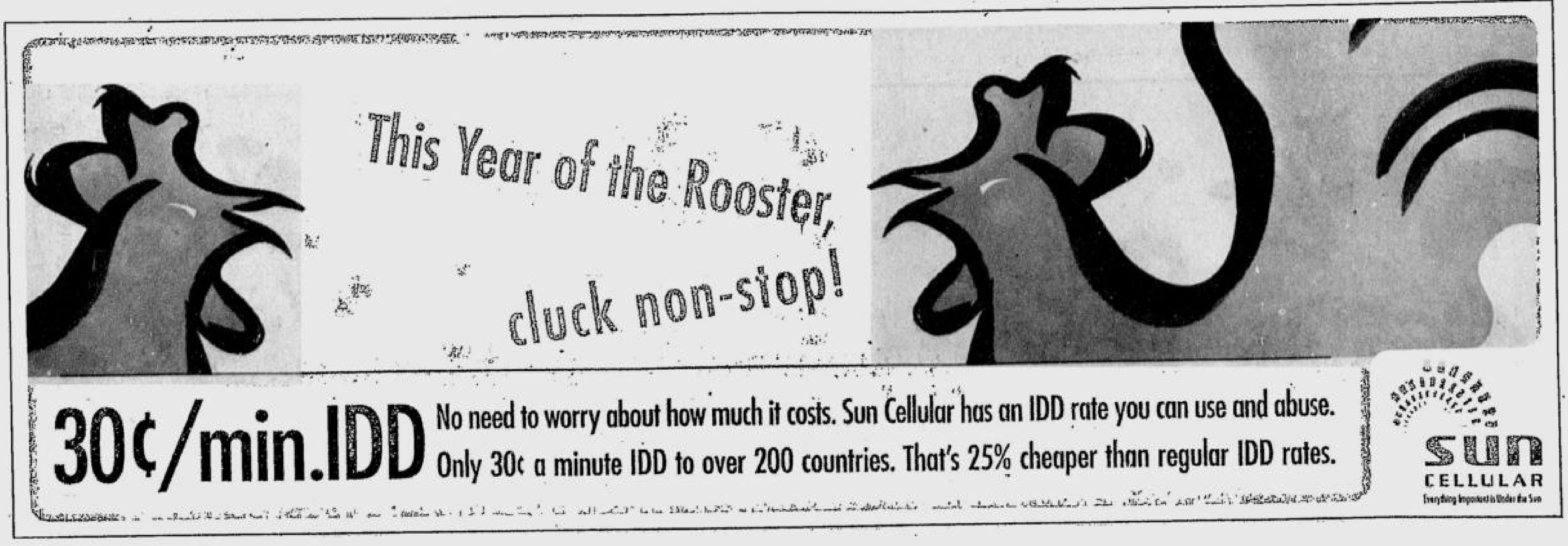
Happy Valentine's Day

WHIMSICAL hearts P3,000

Happy Valentine's Day

HOW sweet it is P5,000


Feb. 14 is Valentine's Day!
ladies' shoes
philippine crafts
ladies' accessories
toyworld
bags
Happy Valentine
homeworld
watsons
snack exchange
We've got it all for you!
SM DEPARTMENT STORE
QUIAPO • MAKATI • CUBAO • HARRISON • NORTH EDSA • STA. MESA • ORTIGAS • LAS PINAS
BACOOR • FAIRVIEW • MANILA •PAMPANGA • ILOILO • CEBU • DAVAO • CAGAYAN DE ORO
BICUTAN • LUCENA • BAGUIO • MARILAO • DASMARINAS • BATANGAS • DELGADO
Love U
I Love You
LOVE
LOVE
VALENTINES
armani mania
GIORGIO ARMANI
KISSES
HUGS


This Year of the Rooster, cluck non-stop!
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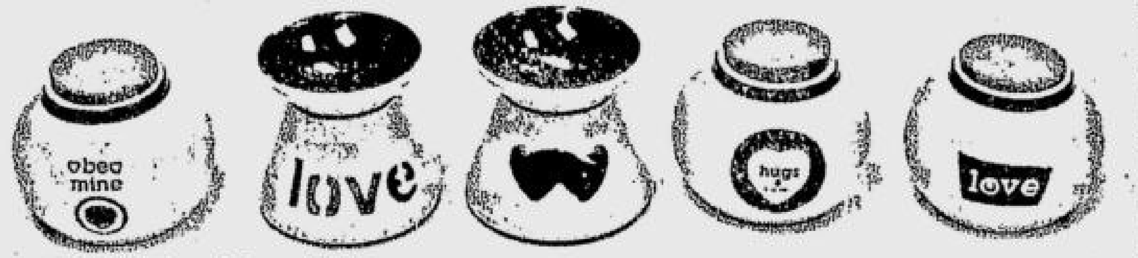
Everything Important is Under the Sun

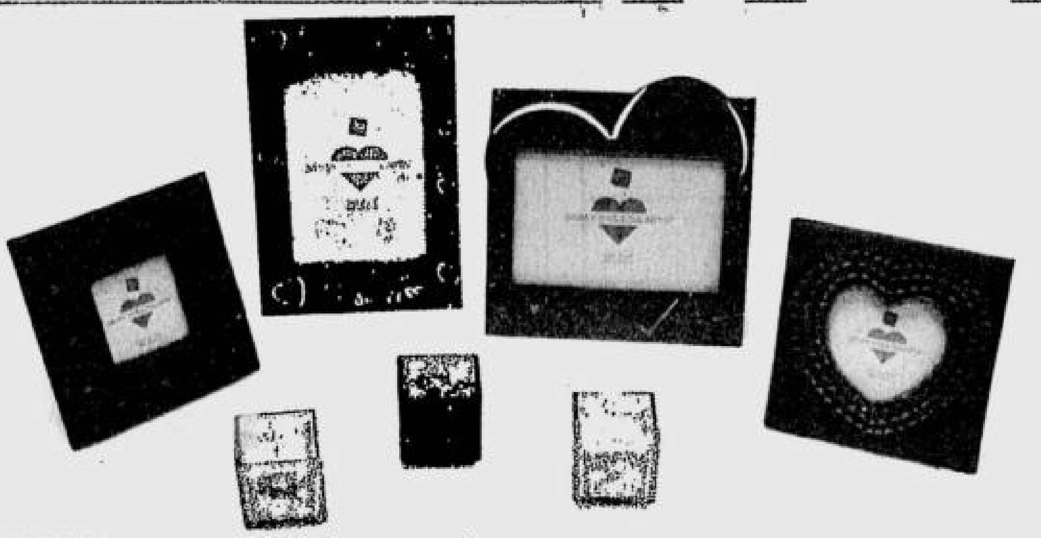

obea mine
love
hugs
love

LIGHT up your lover's fire with these.

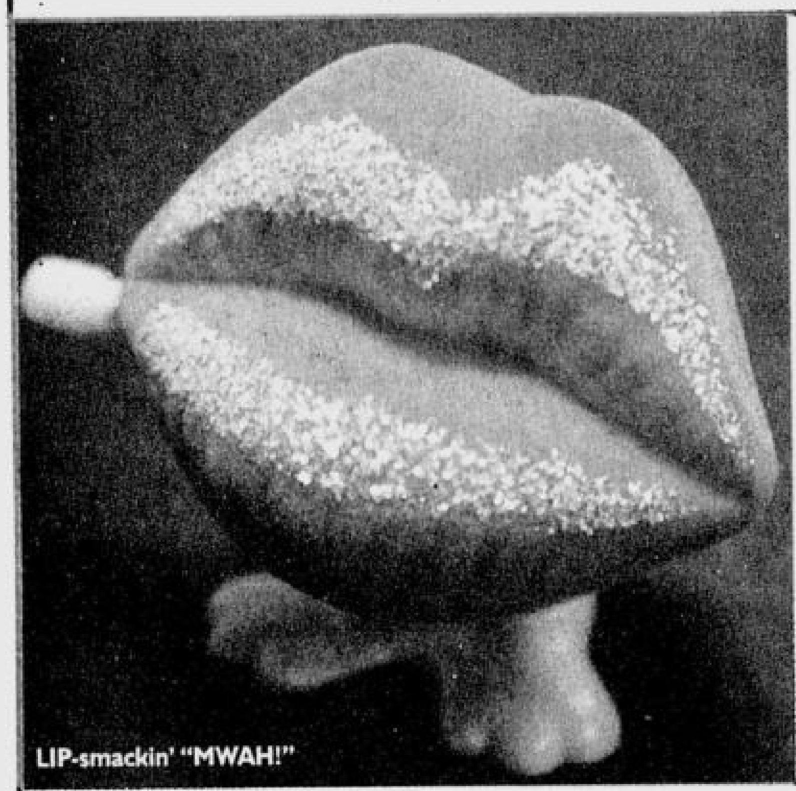
together
you're in my heart
together
everlasting

CUPS of love to fill up

Presents perfect



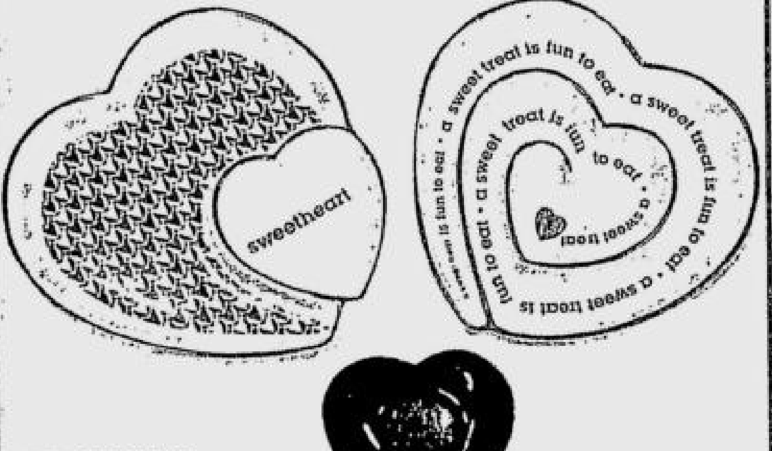
FRAME those moments with the ones you love.



LIP-smackin' "MWAH!"

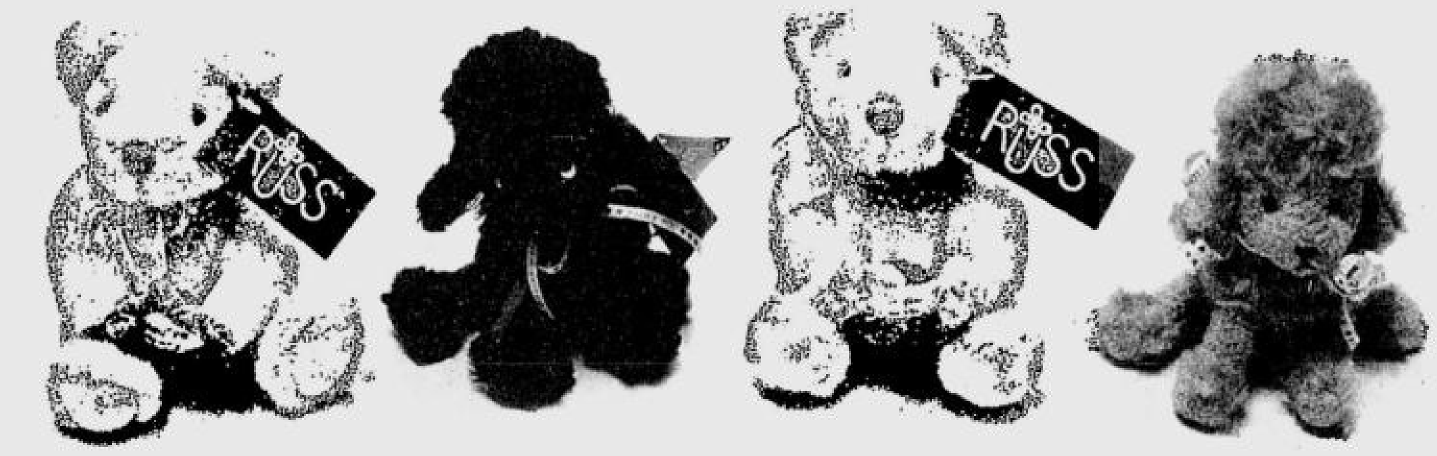
They have adorable stuff all year round but it seems that Russ cranks up the cute factor when Valentine's Day hits. They have plush toys, wind-up lips, sweet scented candles, glittery picture frames and home décor to match your emotions. This Valentine's Day, Gift Gate will be giving away 10 Russ packages that you can win for you and your loved one. Russ goodies are available at Gift Gate branches nationwide. See page one for contest details.

CUPS of tea, cups of coffee, cups of me!


sweetheart
a sweet treat is fun to eat • a sweet treat is fun to eat • a sweet treat is fun to eat

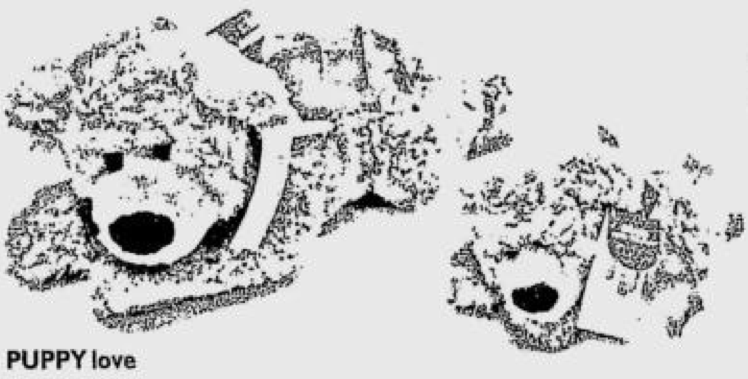
CERAMIC dish for my sweetheart

FOR your eternal flame

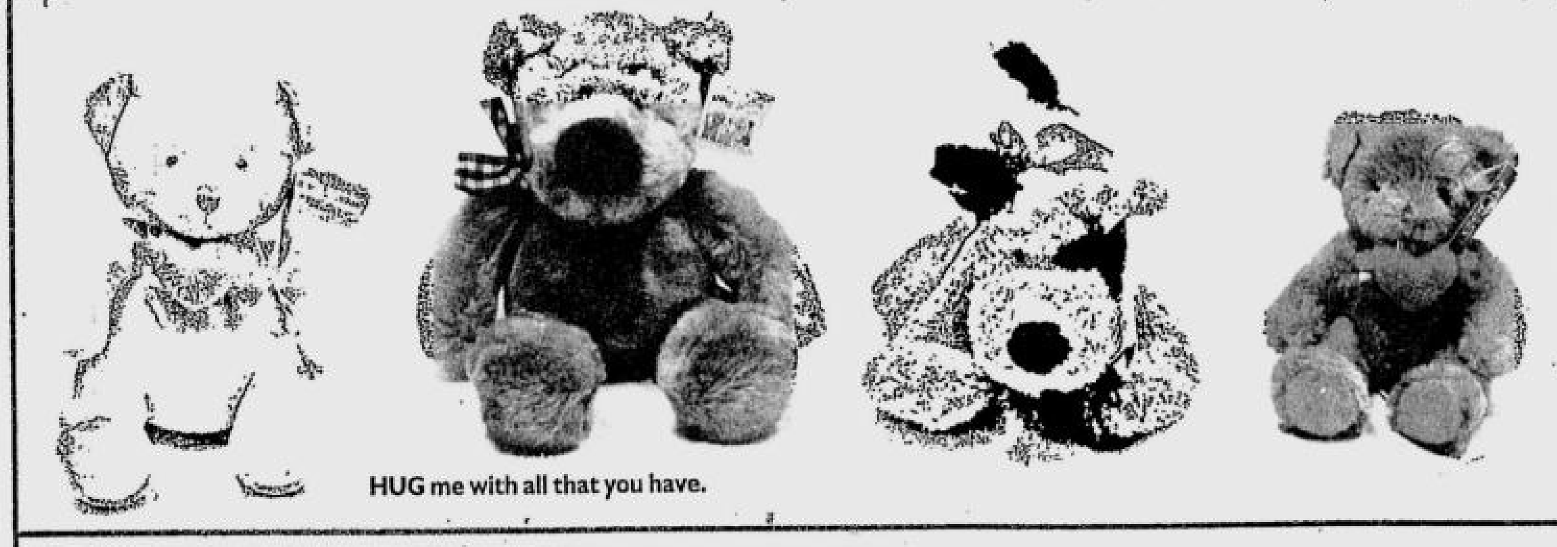


I CAN'T bear to be without you.

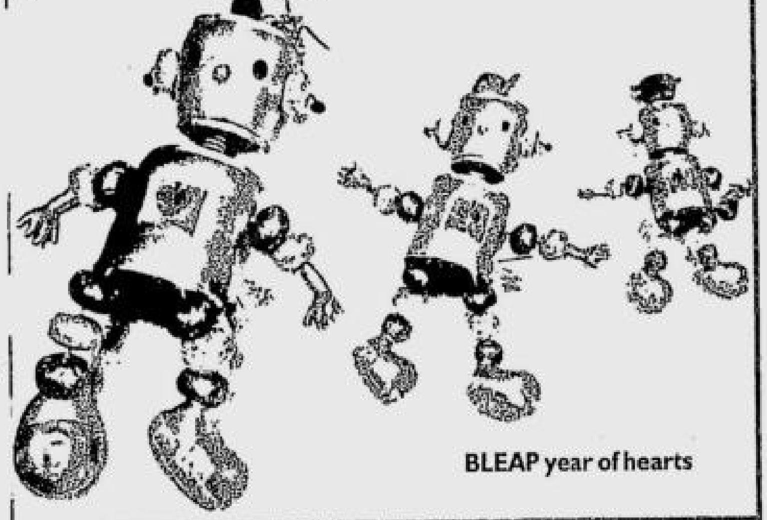
YOU'RE no alien to love.



PUPPY love



HUG me with all that you have.



BLEAP year of hearts

DIVE into my arms.

ANIMAL love planet

Cuddle up. Softspot, the magicians behind our beloved giant Guyitos, have a great Valentine's gift for readers as well. They will be giving away 10 surprise packages that you can win for the one you love. Softspot goodies are available at B Shop at Robinson's Galleria, Cinderella Megamalla and Glorietta and soon at Makro Sucact, Cubao, Novaliches and Cainta. Call 5315189 for orders and inquiries.

PANDA-monium

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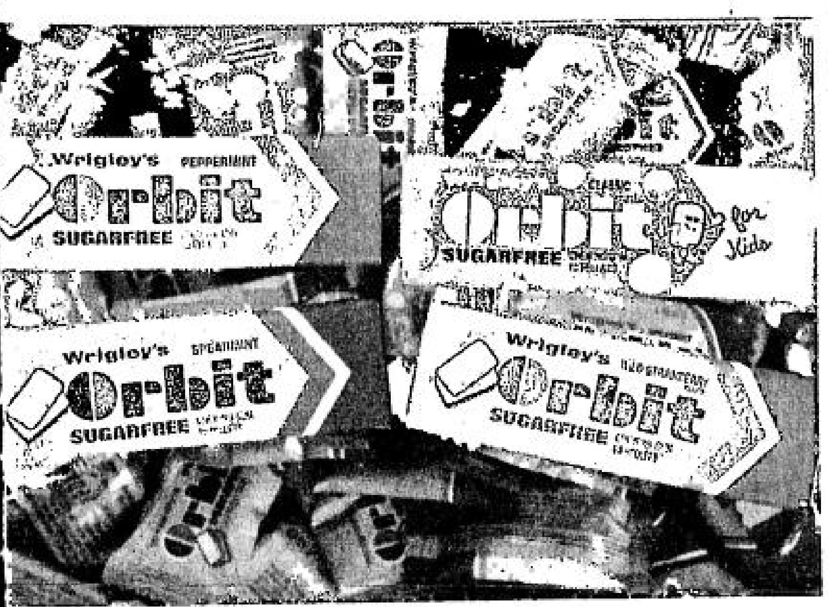
Wrigley's PEPPERMINT
Orbit
SUGARFREE
Orbit for Kids
SUGARFREE
Wrigley's SPEARMINT
Orbit
SUGARFREE
Wrigley's
Orbit
SUGARFREE

Chew on this. Wrigley's, the makers of our favorite Orbit gum, will be giving away gift packs to 50 couples who will join 2bU!'s Valentine Blowout. It's the perfect way to arm you on the day made for kissing.

steven curtis chapman

steven curtis chapman
all about love

nly music. Say it with music. Praise
ill be giving away three CD sets of ro-
c songs for 10 couples to enjoy. This is
your neighbors won't complain

lars of Clay.
s, the band.
ey will be in
Manila on
arch 2 for a
ncert—and
bU! is a co-
esentor. We
ill be giving
vay concert
kets to five
couples.

Shop shop shop. Here's a foolproof present. Why not let your loved one choose your gifts for him or her? Take your beloved on a P5,000-shopping spree, courtesy of Ayala Malls and Inquirer's Marketing Department. Just send an e-mail our way. Check page one for details.

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the punctuation to a perfect evening!

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Dinner, 6:00 PM - 11:00 PM
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to the season of love. Complimentary long-stemmed
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Consumable on food and drinks

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Singled out?

No way. Have a blast with your friends and family this Valentine's Day

THE FLOWERS, the bears, the dates for two—it's like the entire world is conspiring to make the unattached feel left out. But Valentine's Day doesn't only have to mean fun for couples. This year, celebrate this special day with your family and friends.

And you can have the fun on us. Pick out the prizes you want from below and turn to the first page for instructions. Your love story doesn't have to be about a boyfriend or girlfriend. You can write about your best friend, your barkada and your family. Send us pictures too!

ENJOYING a movie

Watch a movie with the family. Festival Mall has a lot of treats for couples this month (Valentine Treat for two @ Chef's Avenue, Hearts Delights @ C-Square, Love Lites @ Food Junctions and Flower Power): But they are, like always, opening their doors for families and barkadas who are also looking for a good time. Festival Mall will be giving away five movie tickets to a lucky reader so he or she can enjoy a good film with the entire family.

Sing the blues away. Did someone do you wrong? Are you pining for an old flame? Do you want to reaffirm your vow to stay single? Don't keep those emotions in. Belt them out and have a blast while you're at it. 2bU! and Red Box are giving five lucky barkadas P3,000 gift certificates to be enjoyed from Mondays to Thursdays.

SING and eat your heart out.

Hit new ground. Discovering new places is even more fun when you're with a group of friends. Try restaurants you've never tried before, do things you've never done, cross off items from your lists of dreams and wishes—and make sure to take lots of pictures. Five barkadas will receive P1,000 gift certificates from China Star, the new Chinese restaurant that is a must-try. (We hear its honey spareribs are really really good.)

PEOPLE are raving about China Star.

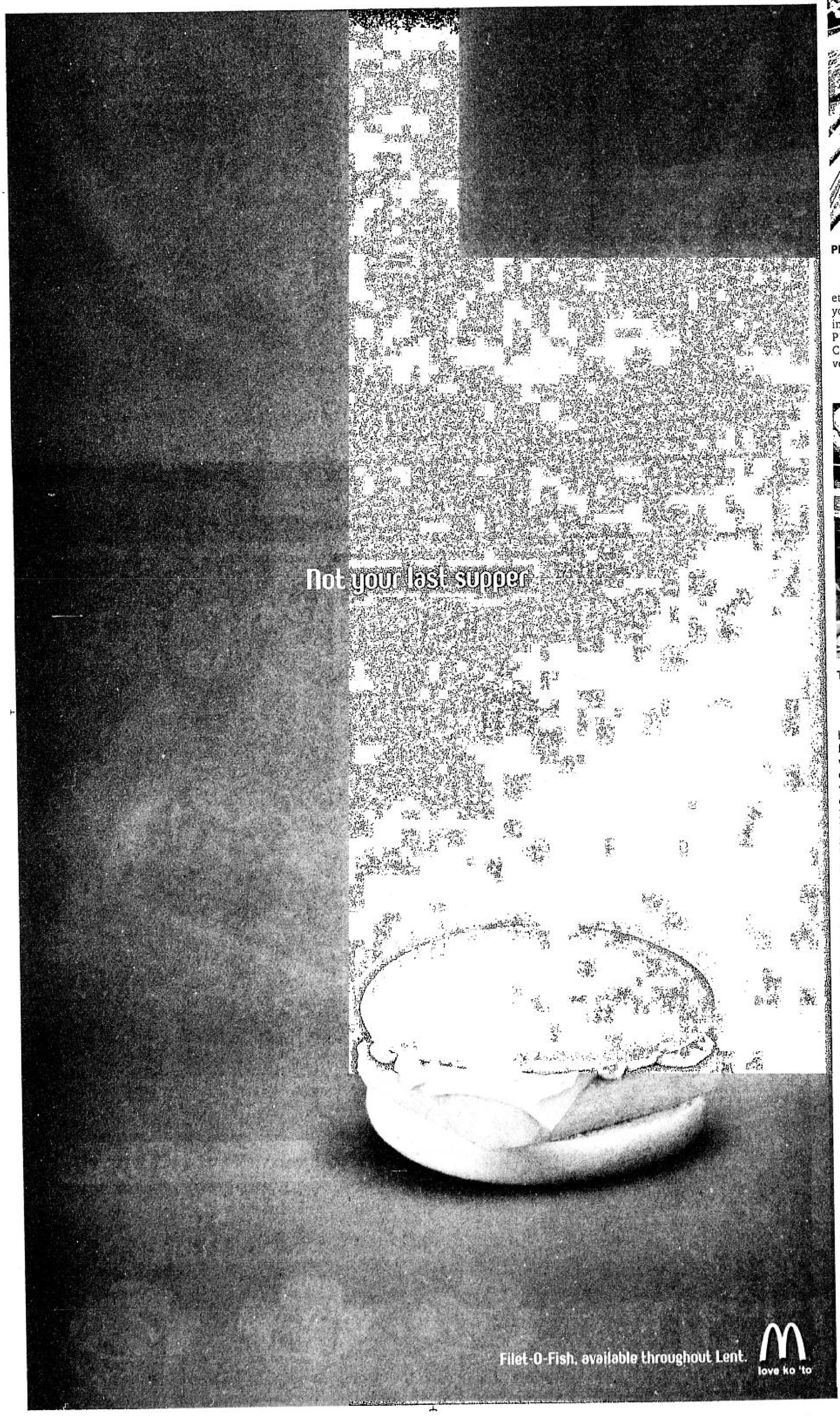
Pig out with your friends. Forget the diet even for a little while. Gather some of your closest friends and engage them in an indulgent meal. Spam Jam is giving away P1,000 gift certificates to five barkadas. Its Caesar salad and curly fries are our favorites. Yum!

SPAM JAM
SPAM
TRY new twists to an old favorite.

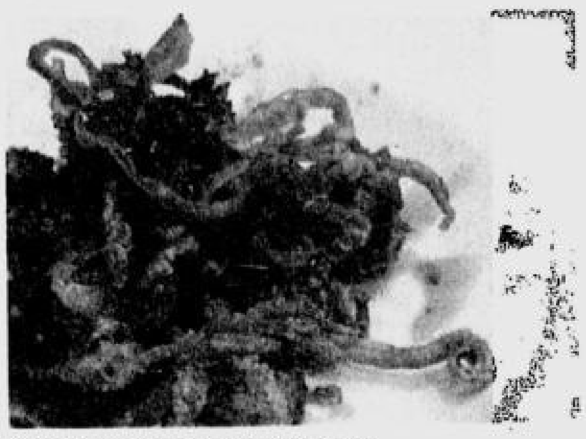
Spill—but not the coffee. Enjoy a good bonding session with your friends over coffee (or tea). If you have been busy with work or school, use this time to update each other on the latest happenings in your world. Share new secrets, remember old ones and have a million laughs. Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf will be giving away P1,000 gift certificates to 10 lucky readers so they can treat their friends. The Chai Latte and Moroccan Mint Latte are must-orders.

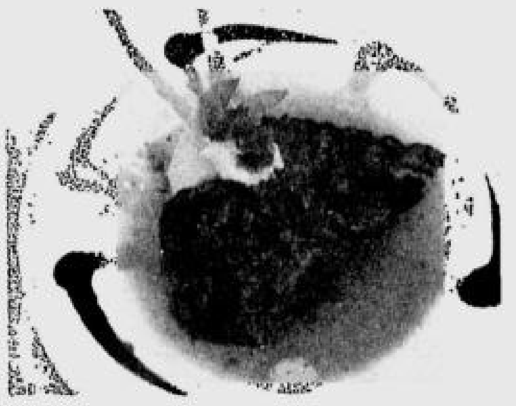
GET a dose of caffeine.

Dissect the latest screen feature. Watch a movie with your friends and enjoy analyzing everything after, from the plot and the script to the heroine's outfits. Greenbelt 3 Cinemas are giving away five tickets each to two barkadas.



CORNMEAL Crusted Oysters with Thai Chili Cilantro sauce, drizzled with harrissa, aioli and beets wasabi puree.. Complimentary for couples on Valentine's Day!


NOT your ordinary bar Calamares


ANGUS Beef, a Katre bestseller! Juicy and delectable to the last bite.

GRILLED Mahi Mahi with fricassee of Calico Scallops served with mild Wasabi Aioli, rice and vegetables

Hot fusion

One look at Katre's Mediterranean-inspired menu and you'd feel right at ease

Text and photos by Zee Castro
Contributor

KATRE started out as a hole in the wall situated across a girly bar in Scout Rallos, QC. Chef and owner Roxs Cailao would overhear customers saying the food was beyond great, but complaining about dressing up for dinner and finding themselves in a Chinese-style dining setting.

Later, Katre relocated to a better spot a few streets down to Dr. Lazcano. Now, people don't complain anymore.

From the outside, the restaurant seems intimidating and pricey, but one visit to Katre can break that misconception. The white table cloth, elegant seats and ambient lighting don't intimidate, they welcome.

You can be dressed to the nines or in more casual clothes, and still blend into Katre's cozy atmosphere. It's definitely a great date place for Valentine's Day.

Katre has a varied clientele, from students and couples to yuppies, families, college friends having reunions, even politicians and their security people. Being near GMA and ABS-CBN stations, bigwigs and celebrities are also frequents diners.

At ease

One look at Katre's menu and you'd feel right at ease. Cailao chose to keep things simple for his Mediterranean fusion cuisine. The menu holds no fancy unpronounceable names, just detailed descriptions of the dishes and their ingredients.

Katre dishes are also relatively inexpensive, compared to other similarly themed restaurants. Main courses and pasta dishes average P250. Bestsellers include the refreshing Pandan Tea (bottomless for P50), Cream of Wild Mushroom soup, Field Green Salad with Grapes, Roast Chicken with Pasta, and Grilled Mahi Mahi.

Fortunately, these dishes are included in its Valentine Weekend Special Menu, which consists of the following:

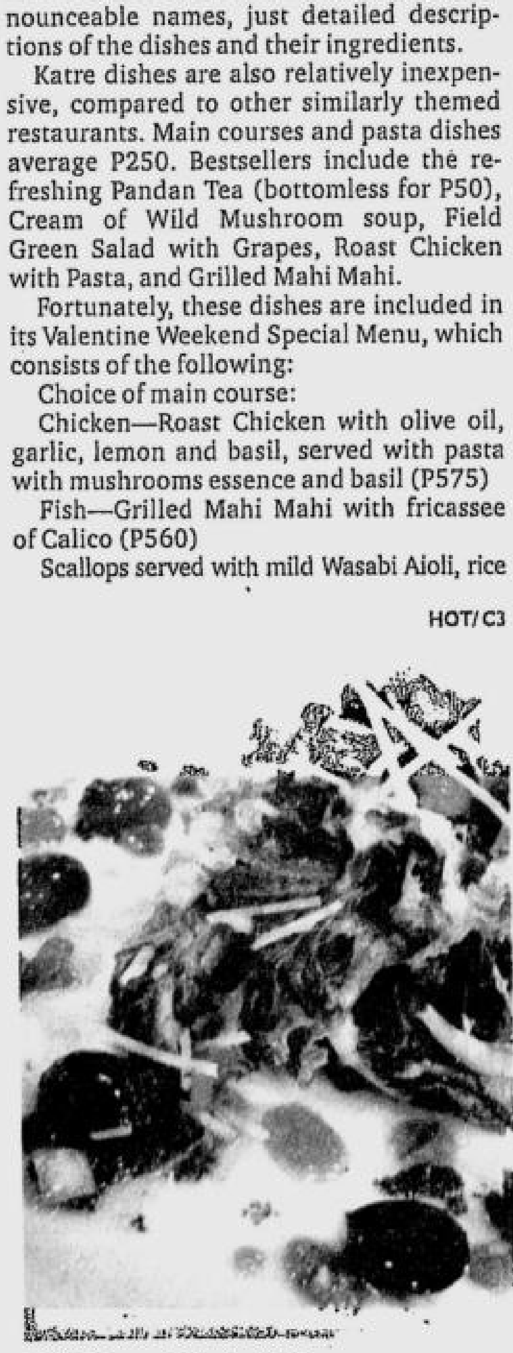
Choice of main course:

Chicken—Roast Chicken with olive oil, garlic, lemon and basil, served with pasta with mushrooms essence and basil (P575)

Fish—Grilled Mahi Mahi with fricassee of Calico (P560)

Scallops served with mild Wasabi Aioli, rice

HOT/C3


FIELD Green Salad with Grapes

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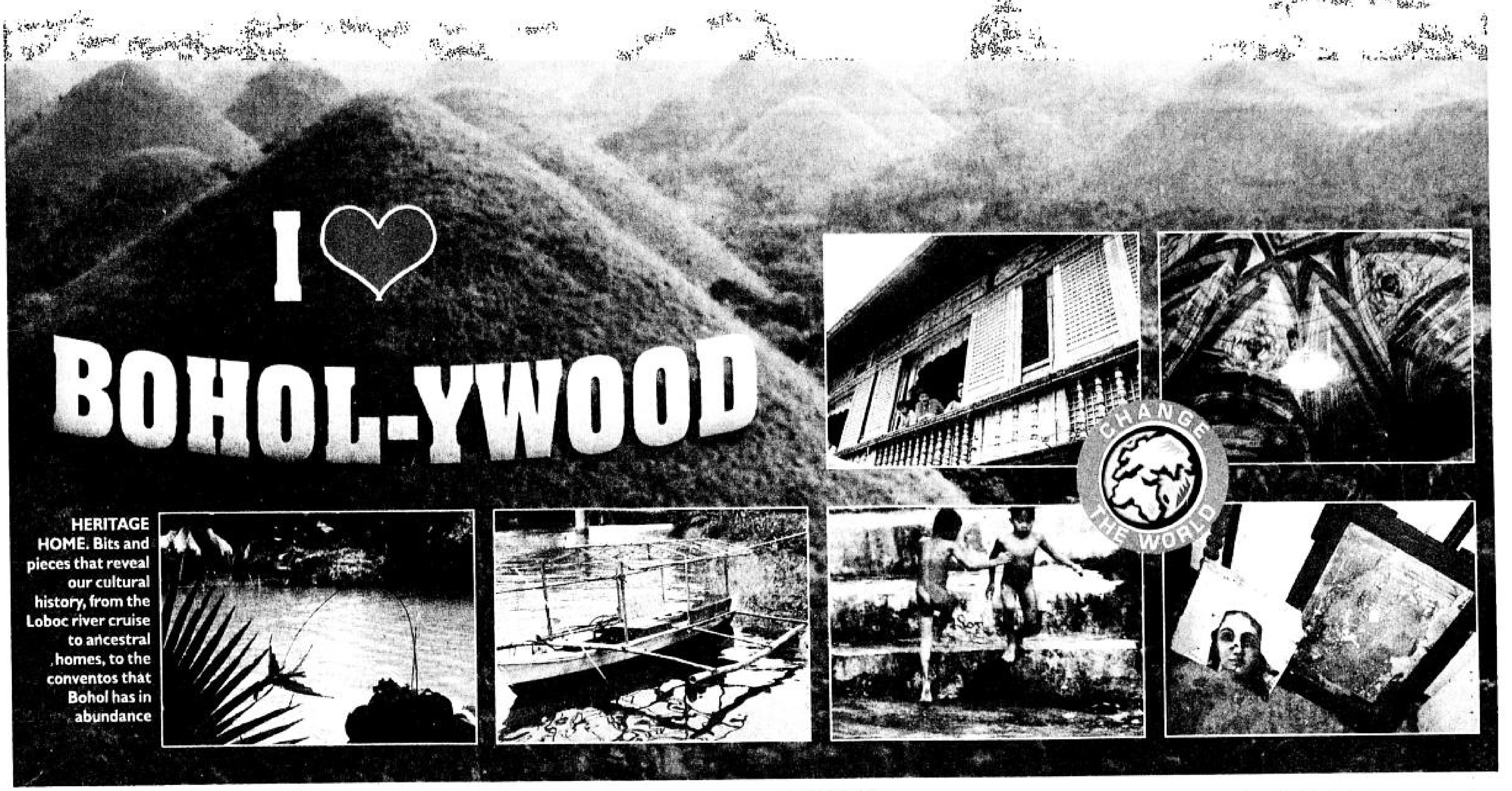
I ♥ BOHOL-YWOOD



HERITAGE HOME. Bits and pieces that reveal our cultural history, from the Loboc river cruise to ancestral homes, to the conventos that Bohol has in abundance

THE HILLS ARE ALIVE. Patrick Reyno loves the Chocolate Hills.

CHOCOLAT. DJ Montano nature tripping

MY favorite Bohol buddy, aside from Gardi and Marianito

Religious Musical Traditions of Loboc

GARDI THE GUARDIAN. Arts and culture pillar Gardi Labad of the Loboc Children's Choir was curator of the Tuburan exhibit.

TOY STORY. You are what you collect.

TILES from the convento floor

JAMMING WITH FATHER JOSEPH. Fr. Joseph with Bea Z.

Photos by Tim Yap

Yapperings

Tim Yap

I HONESTLY had second thoughts about going to Bohol for the simple reason that I am not the kind who enjoys Concert at the Park or **Susan Calo-Medina**'s travelogue type of shows.

In short, I am not a history-culture vulture (I'm more like a pop-culture vulture). I always believe that I can do more by focusing on the now and setting my sights on the future.

But with the Metropolitan Museum's **Ino Manalo** and art patroness and Julia Roberts look-alike **Bea Zobel, Jr.** as captains of our ship, how could I go wrong? I met this French couple who was planning to leave the Philippines out of sheer boredom, but after they joined one of the "Ino and Bea" local excursions, they changed their minds and decided to stay in our land of *gata* and *goto*.

This particular journey took me to a PAL flight to Tagbilaran ("Tagbi-what?" I asked myself). I couldn't find the counter to check in, not knowing that Bohol is in Tagbilaran, much like Boracay is in Kalibo or Caticlan. Our flight was at 8 a.m., I arrived at the airport at 7:50 a.m., but as it turned out, our flight was delayed. As I was checking in, I realized someone up there really wanted me to get to Bohol, maybe to learn something or meet someone. I just left it all to fate and went straight to my plane heading towards Tagbilaran.

Heritage homes

Upon arrival, we were met by two of Bohol's culture vanguards, two jolly men who continue to wave the heritage flag for Boholenos—**Gardi Labad** of the Loboc Children's Choir and **Marianito Luspo**, the director of Holy Name University Museum. Hearing them talk about their history, I sensed a deep sense of pride, and a fear that what they had painstakingly worked hard for might go for naught.

Our group proceeded to the Aya-ay house in Baclayon, one of nine heritage homes threatened to be torn down by the Department of Public Works and Highways to give way to roads.

We were there to attend a meeting with the residents as they welcomed us with open arms, showed us around their home and fed us a *merienda* of local delicacies. Until now, I salivate with the thought of *kamote* dipped in *callos*, a Boholano favorite. I took snapshots of what I thought made the house uniquely Pinoy, aside from the architecture and vintage fabric, diplomas and trophies displayed on the living room, ceramic wedding souvenirs and a collection of 101 Dalmatian toys.

For lunch, we went aboard a floating resto—the Loboc love boat took us on a river cruise around the lovely Loboc river. The mood was dreamy. The barge was adorned with coconut leaves and nipa fruit and local flowers. The water, a hazy shade of celadon, massaged our weary eyes and the cool breeze kissed our cheeks.

Chocolate Hills happy

For background music, we had a medley of everything from "Dahil Sa Iyo" and "Matudnila" to "Guantanamera." An ambient banter, from Tagalog to Cebuano to English to Spanish to French, completed the afternoon buzz.

From there, the "kids" in the group decided to run over to the Chocolate Hills. Lead by the lady behind Ino's success, his mom **Cecilia**, us happy troopers gamely marched and climbed 216 steps to get to the top where the best view of the famed bumps from Bohol.

"I want to buy one of these hills," our companion, **Patrick Reyno** of the Manila Jockey Club, said. "Let's all buy one each so we can all be neighbors!" I seriously gave this suggestion much thought.

Dinner was held at the Dauis *convento*, in a beautiful *sala* with a domed ceiling painted in the 1930's by **Rey Francia**. Multi-colored flowers adorned the tables, making one Boholano comment, "It looks like it's for Our Lady of Waikiki!"

A concert by the Loboc Children's Choir preceded our heavenly dinner (it would take another article to describe how yummy the food was), which was superbly catered by **Vicky Wallace** of the Bee Farm.

"You guys are better than the Vienna Boy's Choir, you're better than the Chinese Choir (if there's one), you're better than everyone!" enthused *tita* Bea Zobel, after being extremely moved by their performance. The other guests were in tears, too. Their emotion-inducing decibels and performance took me on a roller-coaster goosebump ride. If you've heard these kids' voices and seen their happy, innocent faces, you'd know what I mean.

Loboc Heritage Center

The next day saw the launch of the Tuburan program. It was a joint project of the Diocese of Tagbilaran , Loboc Socio-Cultural Cooperative, and the Met Museum. The project aimed to turn the *convento* of Loboc into a heritage center.

The Misa Baclayana, a 19th century mass, signalled the opening of the heritage exhibit by the youth of Loboc—the product of a Met heritage workshop for the youth. The "River of Song" and "Kapanulundanan" (say it again and again) exhibit showcased the musical heritage of Loboc.

After that was the official launch of the Tuburan (meaning spring) project, which presented the aims and goals of the group. Gardi presented the 10-year plan for Loboc's arts and culture. "I hope we're still alive by that time," he quipped.

The governor then declared Loboc as the arts and culture center of Bohol, which was greeted by wild applause by the young people of Bohol. The morning rituals were interspersed with musical numbers from the traditional music of Loboc, which included the choir, the band, and music teachers or cantoras.

We then had a spectacular lunch of local food, including an incredible coconut soup and crabs. But what I could not forget was the ube, which Bohol is actually famous for.

To fight for

R&R happened at the Panglao Island Nature Resort, which I want to visit again for its homey villas.

Looking back, what I thought would be a boring field trip turned out to be a goosebumpy eye opener on our heritage.

It isn't enough that we focus on the present and future. A good understanding and appeciation of the past proves that we can go a long way in defining the present and planning for the future.

To quote Bea Zobel, Jr. in her teary-eyed speech to the people of Bohol, "You always say `thank you' to us for visiting your great province, but we are the ones who should thank you, for sharing with us your culture, because it is what defines our being Filipino. And this is what we should fight for."

FILIPINO GIGOLO. Joel Uichico, our very own Richard Gere

K HALL. Karen Santos at Convento Azotea dinner

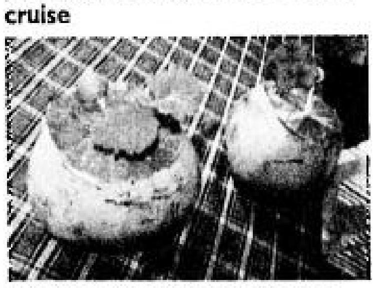
Kapanulundanan

TUBURAN HERITAGE. The bishop of Bohol with Marianito Luspo of Holy Name Nuseum

SOUTH STAR. Bunny Ludo of Cebu poses with the tarsiers.

ON THE BUS TO BOHOL. Our winningest Metropolitan Museum guide, Ino Manalo

BOHOL'S RESIDENT DJs. Music providers during the Loboc River cruise



DA COCONUT NUT. "It's the coco fruit from the coco tree..."

KODAKAN. Part of any Pinoy gathering

PRETTY WOMAN. Bea Zobel, Jr. proves that preserving a country's heritage has its rewards.

CULTURE MOVERS. Pillie Aquino and Joseph Gonzales

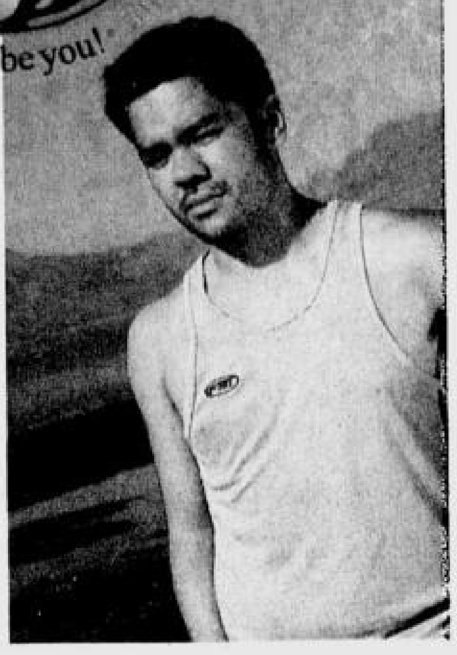
Marcelo Famaya Villamor and Selvina Joag

FAMILY TREE. This painting welcomed us into the Malon Ayay-ay house.

MUSICAL PLAYGROUND. LOBOC Children's Choir costumes on display

GEOFF Rodriguez

MONICK Enriquez


FABIAN Mangahas

COOKIE Lee

MARC Leviste

Fearless Pinoys

Ten daring individuals will compete in the Philippines' first extreme stunt TV show called Enervon AXN Xtreme

By JR Victorio
2bU! Correspondent

HOW far would you go to experience extreme excitement? Would you traverse a two-inch steel beam suspended three stories high? Would you eat a cat's intestine or a bull's testicles? Would you dare go underwater with ferocious crocodiles?

Ten daring individuals who have the guts for these adventures will compete in the Philippines' first extreme stunt television production on AXN. The show, called Enervon AXN Xtreme, will be broadcast soon in more than 30 Asian countries.

After six hours of grueling tryouts and tough interviews during the qualifying rounds last December at the Rizal Coliseum, five guys and five girls were chosen to compete.

The Pinoy male species is represented by young politician Marc Leviste, commercial model Geoff Rodriguez, Mechanical Engineering student Gong Shu Xian, future scuba diver Fabian Mangahas and "student for life" Jimmy Hendra.

Challenging the guys are Chinese educator Jolly Chinuangco, party animal Monick Enriquez, single mother Cookie Lee, smiley-faced Anne Luverne Olandez and Filipino-American beauty queen Michelle Nocon.

Subic was the perfect setting for the extreme challenges presented in the show. Starting Feb. 24, catch all finalists in three hair-raising episodes that will see them carry out one thrilling feat after another in their quest for Asia-wide fame, fortune and glory.

Join in the fun and vote for your favorite contestant on AXN's website when an online poll kicks off on February 21. For plucky Pinoys who want to experience first-hand the spirit of the Enervon AXN Xtreme stunts, an on-ground event has been laid out for mid-February, giving the public a chance to share in the extreme action.

E-mail the author at jr_victorio@yahoo.com

JIMMY Hendra

GONG Shu Xian

ANNE Luverne Olandez

MICHELLE Nocon

JOLLY Chinguanco

Hot fusion

From page C1

and vegetables

Surf and Turf—Cornmeal crusted Pacific Cod with Thai Cilantro Pesto served with squid ink Risotto (P735); and Grilled Batangas Tenderloin with Shitake Beef (P760)

Grilled Angus Rib Eye steak Au Jus, served with Horse Radish, Mashed Potatoes with Beets

Price of main course includes complimentary hors d'oeuvres per couple (Cornmeal Crusted Oysters with Thai Chili Cilantro sauce), Soup Sampler (Katre best-seller, Cream of Mushroom soup with Tortilla Crisp, Tomato Brunoise, Cream Fresh and Parmesan), Salad Sampler (Field Green Salad with Balsamic Vinaigrette, served with grapes, capers, kalamata and capsicum).

For dessert, you can choose either Chocolate Fudge Cake, Crème Brulée or Carrot cake.

For Valentine's Day, there are three seating schedules: 6-7:30 p.m., 7:30-9 p.m., and 9-10:30 p.m. It's best to book before the big day.

Katre is located at 103 Dr. Lazcano St., QC. Open daily (except Mondays) for lunch and dinner (12-2 p.m. and 6-10 p.m.). Call 3734705 and 3746650.

Katre will be giving away a gift certificate to a lucky couple.

ROAST Chicken with olive oil, garlic, lemon and basil, served with pasta with mushrooms essence and basil

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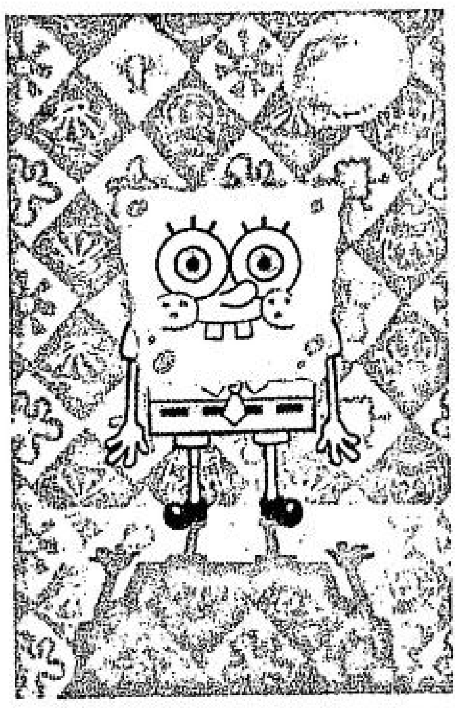
Stephen Hillenburg's undersea playground

The creator of SpongeBob SquarePants talks about his hit creation

By Maui V. Reyes
2bU! Correspondent

FORTY-TWO-YEAR-OLD Stephen Hillenburg has achieved many great things. For starters, he's taught kids Marine Biology, has a master's degree in experimental animation at the California Institute of Arts, and he conceived the lovable wallaby Rocko in 1993 for "Rocko's Modern Life."



A SQUARE peg in a bunch

That, and he finally answered the age-old question: Who lives in a pineapple under the sea?

2bU! got on the phone with one of the hottest cartoon animators today (so hot that Christian groups in the States have been complaining that the characters on SpongeBob SquarePants are promoting homosexuality). And just in time for the release of the SpongeBob SquarePants movie!

When did you first realize you wanted to illustrate?

I was inspired when I was 12 years old. I went to this film festival, and they showed films from all over the world, and it was an experience that just left me with fond memories. It was such a big inspiration to me. I wasn't influenced by television as a kid. I was influenced by filmfests.

You minored in Marine Biology in college. When did your fascination with marine life start?

Well when I was in kindergarten I loved drawing the sea, and the ocean... and Science, in general. One of the things I loved to do was look at the beaches in Southern California. And in the 60's there were these specials on TV about sharks, and at that time it was such a huge thing because not a lot of people did those before. Then in high school I started scuba diving, and then I taught kids marine science, and I was also painting on the side. The painting part was something very personal. I never thought I could turn it into a career. And then I saw another filmfest that was all about animation, and that made me want to go back to school again.

And where did the idea of SpongeBob come from?

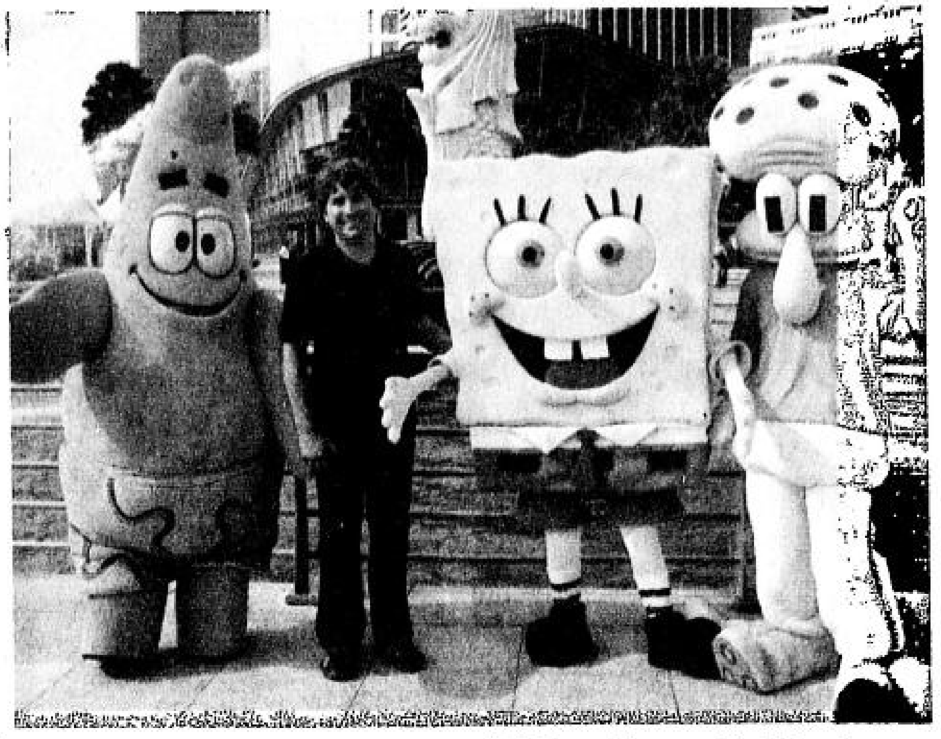
I wanted a Jerry Lewis type of character who lived underwater. I like to surf, so I wanted a show that combined surf culture and marine biology. And I thought of the oddest sea creature there is... a sponge. It's funny, it's silly, it's strange. He's a square peg in a bunch.

Did you ever imagine that as a cartoon, it would appeal so much to adults as well? Dr. Dre and Bruce Willis are fans!

It's a kid's show, obviously, but we make it funny for us, like those animated short films I used to watch. Like Ren and Stimpy! It's all about characters drawn in a slapstick way, among other things. Visually, it's very easy for kids to understand.

You've said that you don't want to let a lot of celebrities do cameos, because that would be too much like The Simpsons...

Well that's not our territory to have a vast number of cameos. That's all been explored by the Simpsons, and SpongeBob is an entirely isolated world, while the Simpsons are this parallel universe to ours. Any cameo from somebody from our world would be weird. We did it for the movie because he ventures into our world. We try to keep the series simple, to make it all about the cast.



PATRICK Star, Stephen Hillenburg, SpongeBob SquarePants and Squidward Tentacles

Who are your favorite characters?

I think Squidward is funny. But then there's Patrick. He can steal the show sometimes. He's the sidekick, so he has a lot of funny moments.

Will you be adding more characters to the show?

We just want to keep the show simple and not try to have too many characters. So it's about SpongeBob, and if we need other characters, we'll add them. But then that would mean a new design, new animation, and new problems. So we'd like to keep it simple.

So you model characters after people you know in real life?

A lot of people, like Pee Wee Herman... But each character is a combination of people I know or heard about. Like, people in your life who's always grouchy. Or, like, everyone knows a guy who's like Patrick. We can all think of someone, right? It's basic human behavior, really.

And what was it like working with David Hasselhoff?

He was great to work with. He had to do stunts and he had to make fun of himself. And he had to wear these red shorts in the middle of the lake in winter.

PATRICK the scene-stealer

What's in store for SpongeBob?

We're doing 20 new episodes.

Will SpongeBob get a girlfriend?

No, no girlfriend. He's this innocent character, and a girlfriend might make him too grown-up.

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ASSUMPTION College representatives to the Philippine Association of National Advertisers (PANA) Marketing Communications Competitions: Ma. Rosario L. Vilchez, Abigail M. Ochoa, Katherine M. Choy, Jaqueline B. Bilbao and Kyla Adielle G. Ortigas, with professor Neal Tieng (extreme left)

Turning young women into achievers

ASSUMPTION College is vigorously pursuing as ever the vision of its founder, Blessed Marie Eugenie Milleret de Brou.not closing down.

And on Feb. 12, the school in San Lorenzo, Makati is inviting everyone to visit. It will open its doors and welcome college applicants who may want to see first hand how classes are conducted and what day-to-day activities are like.

The school was established to shape young women into active, socially-aware, passionately committed achievers who would be future leaders in their respective fields.

Alumnae of the school located are striving to make a difference in various fields and contributing whatever they can to make the world a better place. They are known as, "Women of faith. Women of action."

Assumption College believes it is in a unique position to become a leader and innovator in transformative education. It is contributing to nation-building through its charism of education for social transformation, strength and experience as a pioneer in the country in teacher-training based on a transformative pedagogy, and track record for unleashing the potentials of its graduates.

Who's who

Its roster of alumnae shows how successful the school is in pursuing its vision. It includes President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo; Assumption Alumnae Association president Judy Araneta Roxas of the Araneta Group of Companies; award-winning film director Marilou Diaz-Abaya; entrepreneur Margarita Fores; Philippine Anti-Graft commissioner Tessie Baltazar; Eleanor Roosevelt award winner Marietta Primicias Goco; clinical psychologist Dr. Teresa Villasor; ABS-CBN's Bantay Bata Foundation founder Gina Lopez; SM Inc. president and Banco de Oro Universal Bank chair Teresita Sy-Coson; Philippine Educational Theater Association (PETA) president C.B. Garrucho and her sister, Charito B. Nañagas, a partner at the accounting firm Joaquin Cunanan Price Waterhouse; Chinit Rufino, executive director of Marie Eugenie Institute; Sabrina Bautista Panlilio, wife and mother; and a whole line of Prieto women starting with PDI's chair, Marixi Rufino Prieto.

Young achievers

A younger generation of Assumptionists are also living up to the college's tradition of excellence and service.

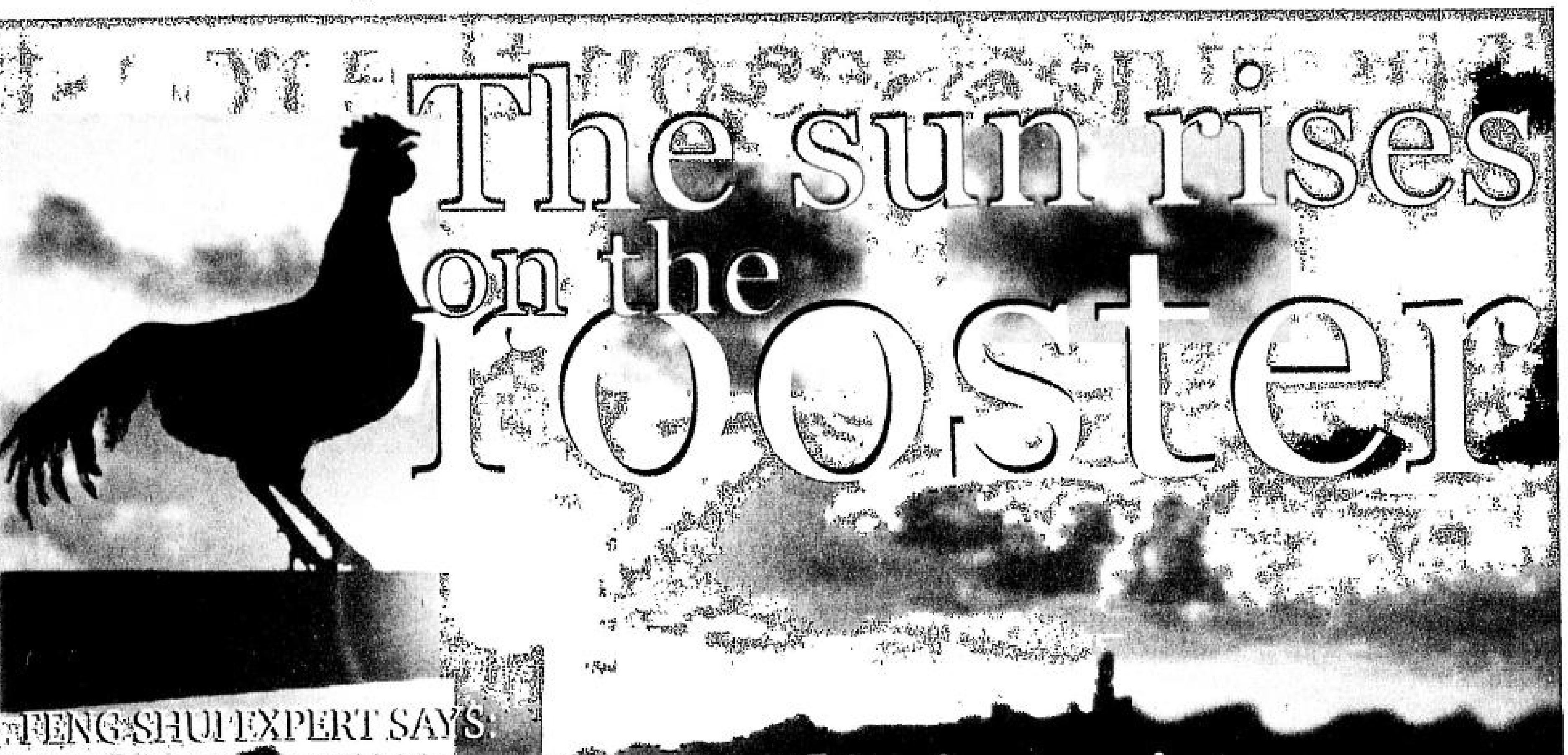
For instance, Jennifer Teves, 22, was recently named one of the Ten Outstanding Students of the Philippines and a Benigno Aquino awardee for Nationalism.

She graduated in 2004 BS in Psychology summa cum laude and recipient of the Mother Marie Eugenie award, the highest honor given by the college.

Media Production graduate Isa Bautista project as a senior, an 18-minute documentary, "Mayin Pagbabayu" (Kapampangan for "Mayroong Pagbabago") was named "Best Student TV Production" in the 2004 Catholic Mass Media Award. It is a poignant depiction of the Aetas' struggle to attain equality and integrity in modern society.

Assumptionists have also made their mark in international competitions like the Interior Design competition in Japan. The college's students benefit from their interaction with people of different nationalities like Koreans. The curriculum enables foreign students to integrate easily with their Filipino counterparts.

The Year of the Wood Rooster comes at midnight of Feb. 9, after the Chinese lunar year of the Wood Monkey ends on Feb. 8.



The sun rises on the rooster

FENG SHUI EXPERT SAYS:

Better days for Filipinos in 2005

By Joel V. Nigos

Photos by Raquel Gomez

PROFESSOR Charlie Chao, considered the first Feng Shui teacher in the Philippines

THOUGH the elements that comprise the Wood Rooster do not complement each other, thus signifying a not so bright year for us, things would still be better off this year as compared to the Year of the Wood Monkey as changes that would happen will be milder or softer, says feng shui master professor Charlie Chao, considered the first feng shui teacher in the Philippines and in Asia.

[illegible]

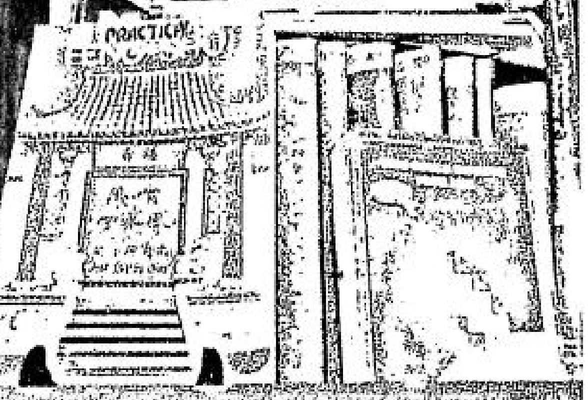
The Year of the Wood Rooster comes at midnight of Feb. 9, after the Chinese lunar year of the Wood Monkey [illegible]. In Chinese tradition, Chao says, [illegible] are used to celebrate the season by welcoming the New Year and sending off the old year and its misfortunes. A practice which has been adopted by the West, including the Philippines every Jan. 1, through these the Chinese expect good fortune, good health and new life as they welcome the New Year.

Chao, who has written two books, "Practical Feng Shui" and "Practical Geomancy," adds that the Wood Rooster [illegible] from Feb. 9, 2005 to Jan. 28, 2006. [illegible] called the Green Wooden Rooster Year, which only comes every 60 years in the Chinese Horoscope Cycle.

Yijing philosophy

[illegible]

For 2005, Chao says, the elements of Wood Rooster do not complement each other. As a consequence, we will be expecting changes although softer and milder in our economy, peace and order and way of life, our country's ecological environment, according to Chao.



PRACTICAL Feng Shui and the I Ching [illegible] by professor Charlie Chao

[illegible]

Chao says the continual problems faced up with economic recovery would still be there this year. As our country's efforts for economic recovery would be hard to achieve, unemployment and poverty would continue to be the headache of the government.

Your Luck Is Just A Text Away This Chinese New Year!

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Rat
Ox
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Monkey
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1969
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The sun rises on the rooster

From page H1

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There are bright prospects for the movie industry as well, but government support and subsidies are still needed. Tired of the usual immoral relationships that beset show biz, Chao says there would be less scandals involving young stars getting pregnant. Young actors and actresses will also rise, as they try to fill the void left by the demise of the "king of Philippine movies", Fernando Poe Jr.

And for those who are planning to construct a house as well as choosing to place their altar, Chao says, the lucky feng shui orientations are the North and South directions. Facing these directions will be auspicious and favorable.

Lucky businesses

Chao says that this year the telecommunications industry will continue to flourish. Fast-food chains and restaurants will also prosper. Other businesses which are found to be lucky this year are electronics businesses, which includes computers, and fashion.

Tourism is also expected to boom. So, it's high time the government provides this industry its much-needed support. Slump in the construction and real estate businesses will finally come to an end as they are expected to do well this year. The stock market also will not be left behind, giving the country a condition of economic stability that it badly needs.

But there will also be businesses that will not do as well. For those who are planning to engage in these businesses, better think it over first. Businesses that will not be profitable are those which are involved in agriculture, lumber, garments and textiles, as well as shoes and bag manufacturing.

Expect also the continued increase in prices of basic services as electricity and water rates will continue to go up. This would be primarily due to the uncontrolled hike in the prices of petroleum products as their prices generally affect all the products that we purchase. This also would not sit well with the country's foreign investors, as they will shy away from the country because of higher expenses in business operations. Electricity and water rates will remain to be higher than our neighboring Southeast Asian countries.

Natural calamities

For the year of the Wood Rooster, the world as usual would be shocked by natural disasters. The likes of the 9.1 magnitude earthquake in the Indian Ocean, which eventually led to the Asian tsunami, are not being counted out to happen again. There will also be volcanic eruptions, plane accidents, ship mishaps and floods, which hit various countries in 2004. Epidemics, especially those affecting the lungs and liver, will also be rampant.

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In general, the lucky personalities this year are those born under the sign of Tiger, Dragon, Horse and Dog. Moderately fortunate are those born under the signs of Rat, Snake, Goat and Ox. Personalities born under the signs of Rabbit, Rooster, Monkey and Pig are considered predominantly unlucky.

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Rooster rocks Rockwell

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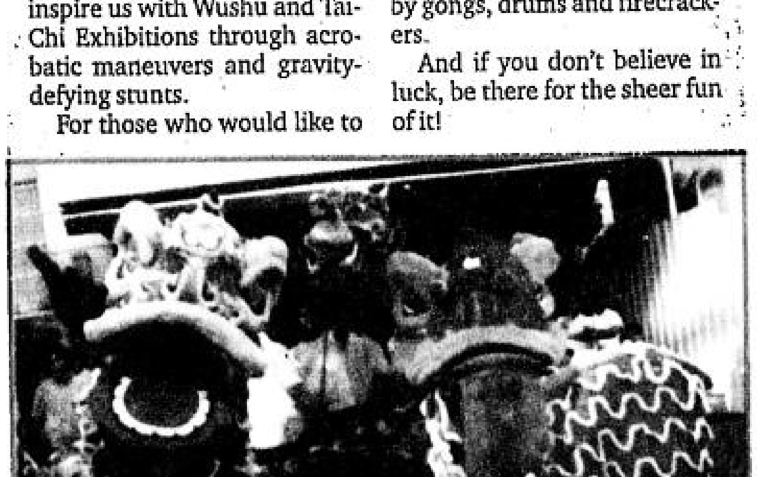

Maybank welcomes the Year of the Rooster

THE YEAR of the Wooden Rooster is here, and in keeping with the practice among the Chinese community in the Philippines, Maybank branches nationwide takes this opportune time to join in the celebrations in their localities to greet them and wish them happiness, peace, good luck and prosperity for the new year ahead.

As in previous years, lucky Maybank customers visiting select branches today, Feb 9th, will be getting special treats like tikoys and ang pao envelopes. In select branches, too, the dragon dance will be performed to usher in good fortune. This is Maybank's way of showing its appreciation to the continued patronage of its Chinese customers.

Aside from the Chinese community in the Philippines, Maybank has likewise established a broad base of Chinese customers in its overseas offices located in Singapore, Brunei, China and Hong Kong. This also includes the parent bank based in Malaysia where Maybank is the biggest banking group, with assets of more than US$47 billion.

The sun rises on the rooster

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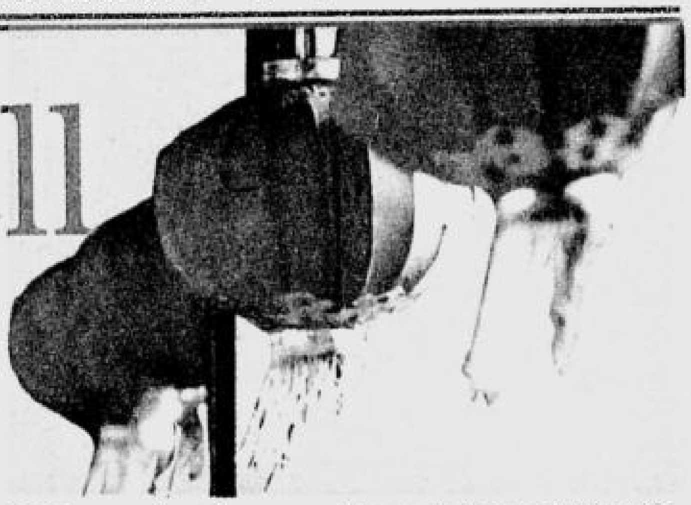

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Your fortunes for the Year 2005

THERE are 12 signs according to the Chinese Horoscope Cycle. We were born on any of the 12 signs. The following are each sign's fortunes in the Year of Wood Rooster according to professor Charlie Chao. Again, Chao reminds everybody that they are for our guidance only. If we have good feng shui, we still need to act so that good fortune would come soonest. If we have bad feng shui, we also need to act so they would be warded off. *Joel V. Nigos*

Rat

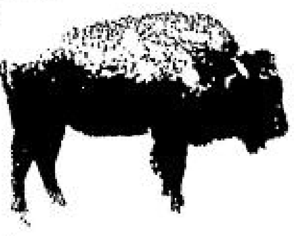
1912, 1924, 1936, 1948, 1960, 1972, 1984, 1996

You begin the year with a lucky star. Fortune and wealth will prosper. You will have many happy occasions. This year is more favorable for female Rats. For male Rats, be humble and mind your own business to avoid unnecessary troubles, then everything will be smooth.

Ox

1913, 1925, 1937, 1949, 1961, 1973, 1985, 1997

Although your star is bright, there is a bad star beside you. Refrain from quarreling with others to avoid envious persons who will bring you troubles and lawsuits. Contentment in yourself will give you a peaceful life. A good chance and opportunity to go abroad for hardworking students. This year is also a good opportunity to pass an examination.



Tiger

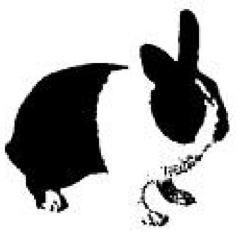
1914, 1926, 1938, 1950, 1962, 1974, 1986, 1998

Your star is bright and shiny. Your dream will come true. There are persons who will help and support you to pursue your projects. A sign for promotion. However, avoid emotional entanglements for a peaceful family life.

Rabbit

1915, 1927, 1939, 1951, 1963, 1975, 1987, 1999

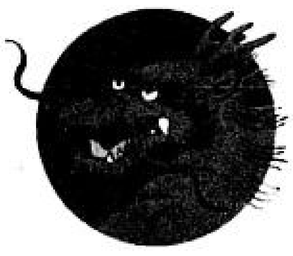
Your horoscope clashes with the year of the Rooster. You should take extra precaution in making decisions. Refrain from quarreling with others to prevent lawsuits. Beware of burglary by thieves. For the elders, physical check-up is needed. Avoid visiting sick persons and attending funerals/interments.



Dragon

1916, 1928, 1940, 1952, 1964, 1976, 1988, 2000

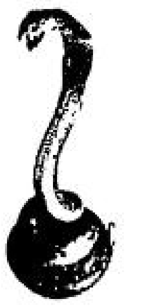
Your star is strong. Helpful friends will assist you on your endeavors. Wealth will increase and your career will improve. However, follow the laws, do not be greedy and don't hurry in expanding your business and plans, everything will be smooth and joyful.



Snake

1917, 1929, 1941, 1953, 1965, 1977, 1989, 2001

There were many persons who will help and support your projects. Wealth and business will prosper. However, there is an unlucky star beside you, refrain from unnecessary activities. Be cautious on driving late at night and long distance travels to avoid accidents.



Shangri-La's finest Chinese cuisine ushers in the Year of the Rooster

IT'S CHINESE New Year! Come celebrate the prosperity, abundance and luck that the Year of the Rooster brings with a grand celebration at the Shangri-La Finest Chinese Cuisine!

Excitement awaits you on Feb. 9 at 5 p.m with a variety of fun activities for the entire family. Watch in awe as an impressive display of colorful fireworks thrill your spirits to no end. Amuse yourself with authentic Dragon Dance and feast on mouthwatering special Chinese dishes.

Let your family enjoy a New Year festivity like no other at the Shangri-La Finest Chinese Cuisine! It's Located 4 Times Street, West Triangle, Quezon City. For reservations, call 373-9888.

財
There's something to crow about at the Shang!
德
德
福
吉
福
祿

It's Chinese New Year with a bang!
Welcome the Year of the Rooster with a crowing feast at the Shang featuring the best in Asian culture and the arts.

A ROUSING TREAT OF FESTIVITIES TO LIVEN UP YOUR SENSES

Chinatown: A Chinese Food & Curio Festival
January 26 to February 20
Level 1, Mall hours

The Echoettes Young Voices
February 5, 5pm
Grand Atrium, Level 2

Dragon & Lion Dance
February 6, 1:30pm-3:30pm
February 9, 2pm-4pm
Grand Atrium, Level 2

Chinese Martial Arts Exhibition by Philippine Ling Nam Athletic Association
February 6, 1:30pm
Grand Atrium, Level 2

"Rooster & The Sun"
Storytelling session with the Alitaptap Storytellers Club
February 5, 3pm-4pm
Art Plaza, Level 4

Free Feng Shui Sessions with Prof. Charlie Chao
February 5 & 6, 1pm-6pm
Level 3, beside Liz Claiborne
* Free Feng Shui reading for every ₱2,500 single or accumulated same-day purchases on February 5 and 6

*Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A3-045 Series of 2005

Streetscape
Live performances by the country's top bands
every Friday and Saturday, 9:30pm-12:30 midnight

Fireworks display
February 5, 11pm

Shangri-La Plaza

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Your fortunes for the Year 2005

Horse

1918, 1930, 1942, 1954, 1966, 1978, 1990, 2002

There are two lucky stars beside you. It is the right time to pursue your plans. Your wealth and career will increase. Female Horse will be luckier this year. For the male, however, refrain from cherry blossom affairs and quarreling with people to avoid envious persons who will bring you trouble and lawsuit.

Goat

1919, 1931, 1943, 1955, 1967, 1979, 1991, 2003

Your star is weak. Do not be greedy and don't hurry in pursuing your plans. Wait for the right time. Be careful in selecting friends, and don't be a guarantor. Refrain from arguing with others for it might lead to lawsuits. Avoid visiting sick persons and attending funerals/interments. The health of your parents might cause you concern.

Monkey

1920, 1932, 1944, 1956, 1968, 1980, 1992, 2004

Your star is dark. Take care of your health especially your stomach or lungs. Don't come home late at night to avoid accidents. Refrain from unnecessary occasions. Be humble and low profile, then everything will be smooth.

Rooster

1921, 1933, 1945, 1957, 1969, 1981, 1993, 2005

Your resistance is weak. Avoid being overworked to prevent pressure and tension. Beware of envious persons who will take advantage of you. Mind your own business. Be humble and patient, relax and take a rest to have peaceful mind.

Dog

1922, 1934, 1946, 1958, 1970, 1982, 1994, 2006

Your star is bright. It is a lucky year for marriage. Wealth will increase as well as your career. There are people who will support and help you to achieve your plans and projects. However, be more humble and don't be greedy so that good fortune will come.

Pig

1923, 1935, 1947, 1959, 1971, 1983, 1995, 2007

There are two unlucky stars beside you. You should take extra precaution in your decision-making. Do not be greedy and don't hurry to pursue your plans to avoid loss of wealth. Refrain from arguing with others. Be patient and control your emotions to prevent unnecessary troubles. Take care of the health of your parents, they might get sick or pass away.

DOT expects influx of tourists for Chinese New Year

THE DEPARTMENT of Tourism (DOT) expects an influx of tourist groups from China to take part in the local celebration of the Chinese New Year this February.

Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace Durano said that all preparations have been arranged to welcome the Chinese tourists and make their visit a pleasant one, thus help pave the way for the arrival of more tourists from this market.

No less than the World Tourism Organization (WTO) has identified China as an emerging big market for outbound travelers, which posted a yearly average growth of 20 percent, and the Philippines has initiated a program to get a big slice of this market, Durano said.

DOT data show that tourist arrivals from China have been increasing by some 40 percent annually. This number is forecast to hit 70,000, rising to 300,000 by 2010. Outbound travelers from China, together with those from Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Malaysia accounted for 964,404 or 51.81 percent of the total 1.861 million visitor traffic to the Philippines from January to October 2004.

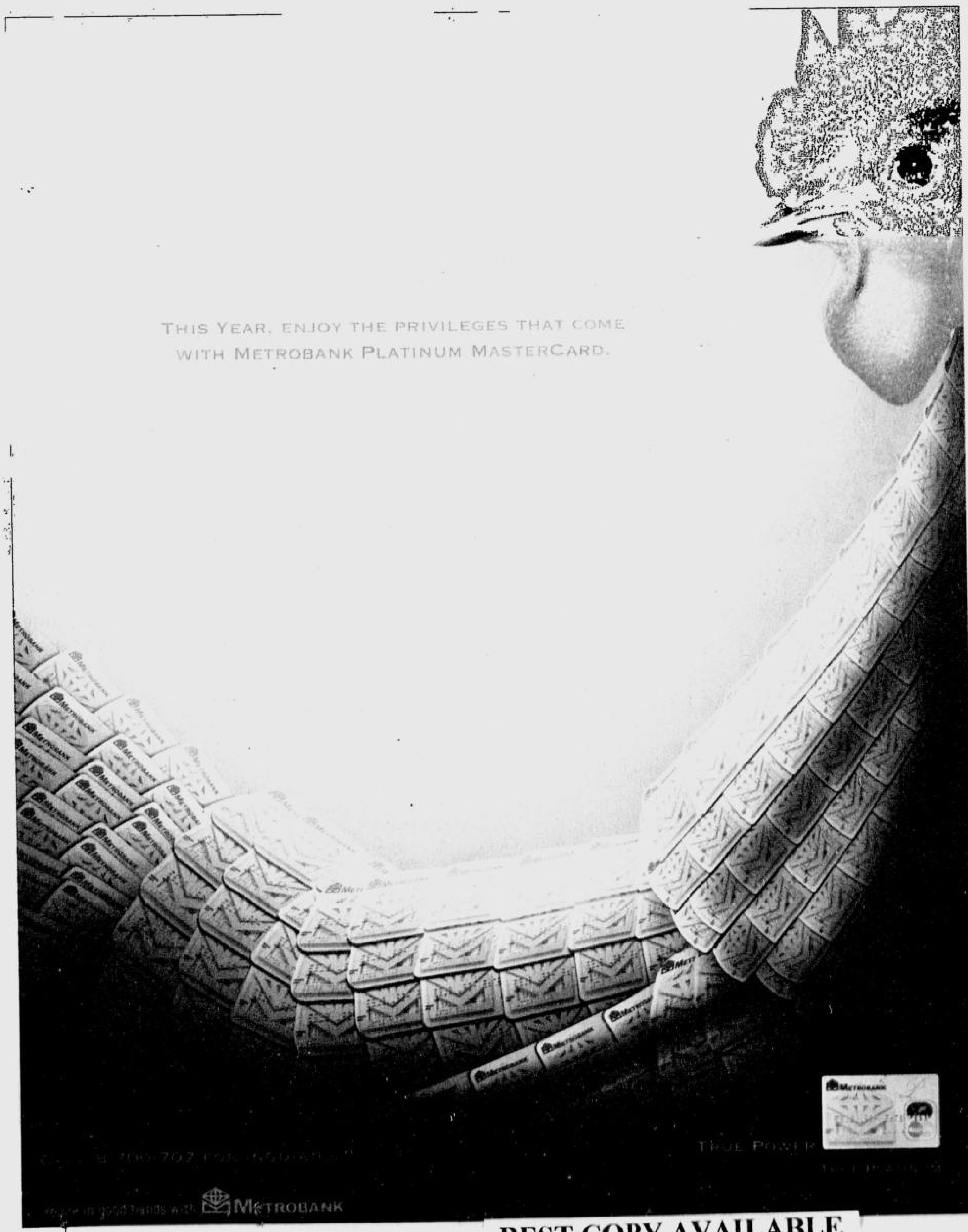
The DOT chief has initiated the creation of a dedicated team to study the particular needs and interests of Chinese tourists. Similar teams have been formed for the other key markets like Japan, Korea, and the balikbayan segment.

In preparation for the arrival of the Chinese tour groups, DOT's Team China initiated and organized a con-

DOT/13

Hyatt Hotel and Casino celebrates Chinese New Year

HYATT Hotel and Casino Manila will celebrate the Chinese New Year in style with a host of spectacular activities and events, including a Bai-sun ceremony, dragon and lion dance, and a welcoming of the God of Fortune. The hotel-wide festival shall mark the beginning of the Chinese Green Wooden Rooster Year on Feb. 9. In perfect timing is the formal opening of Lily, the hotel's signature outlet, which presents an eclectic blend of Chinese and European influences with an accent on Chinese Canton culinary. A myriad of activities has been planned to involve everyone on the festivities. At the Market Café, a unique interactive dining experience with a market style set-up shall treat guests to additional food items to add to what is at present a lavish buffet spread. The Chinese kitchen, without doubt, will feature Chinese traditional festive dishes. Feast on the widest selection for only P1,088 on Feb. 12 and 13; and P1,288 on Feb 9, 10 and 11. Lily, offering the most authentic Cantonese cuisine, is showcasing specialties in special set menus until Monday, Feb. 14. Delicious and authentic, it is backed by five Chinese Master Chefs, each having their own line of expertise. Tailor-made New Year festival set menus are priced at P1,388; 1,888, 2,288 and 2,888. Beverage package is included in selected set menus for a minimum of eight persons. For reservations to either Market Café or Lily, call 245-1234.



THIS YEAR, ENJOY THE PRIVILEGES THAT COME
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TRUE POWER

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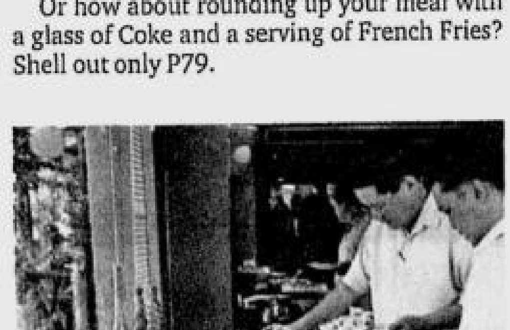
BK booster for the year of the rooster

WHAT better way to welcome the dawn of the year of the rooster than to celebrate it with great-tasting food?

Burger King leads the way with its festival of chicken sandwiches as it introduces two new Chicken Sandwich Saver choices-BK Chicken BLT and BK French Chicken.

Go loco with Chicken BLT (bacon, lettuce and tomato), a hearty sandwich in between yummy seeded bun stuffed with chicken patty, strips of bacon, lettuce, tomato and mayonnaise-enough for an indulgent meal.

You can also delight in the French Chicken variant, loaded with both chicken patty and ham in between generous spreads of Swiss cheese and mayonnaise.



And the best part of all this is, the Chicken Sandwich Saver choices come at a surprisingly purse-friendly price of only P49.

Or how about rounding up your meal with a glass of Coke and a serving of French Fries? Shell out only P79.

KUNG HEI FAT CHOY FROM THE LJC GROUP

Two of the LJC restaurant outlets have daily lunch buffets, Monday to Friday, for the person on the go and wants value for his money. Shown is Ang Hang's 'Fire and Spice and Everything Nice' buffet, featuring hot and spicy Asian Cuisine for those who have fiery tastes, which can be tempered for the less adventurous, upon request. Café Havana Greenbelt, on the other hand, has a buffet feast for those who wish to savor 'nuevo latino' cuisine. To welcome the Chinese New Year, both restaurants will include Chinese food favorites in their lunch buffet menu on Feb. 9. After the sumptuous lunch, find out what's in store for you in the year of the rooster, from the fortune cookies basket available for all guests.

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The sun rises on the ROOSTER

The popular dance done during Chinese New Year traces its origin to ancient China and is usually performed to bring in good luck

The LION DANCE spectacle

Text and photos by Raquel P. Gomez

ARCHIE Queri, 22, coach of the *wushu* and lion dance team of the Northern Rizal Yorklin School, logs in a lot of hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays training the students for the annual lion dance competition among Chinese schools.

He directs the team to perfect the lion dance movements and the drum beats that accompany the dance.

Five students beat the drums alternately in slow and fast patterns while the lion dances accordingly to the beats. While the lion "dances," it signifies a variety of expressions.

Queri said the lion should be made to look sleepy, mad, sad, happy, frightened, or tired.

"The challenge for the lion dance performers, aside from the acrobatic moves, is to render the lion with different facial expressions."

The lion dance seems hard to implement harmoniously as two students carry the big and heavy green lion head and body and still do the lion's expressions.

"The wushu and lion dance started as an extracurricular activity, then it became part of the school's curriculum," said Queri, who has trained students not only from Yorklin school, but from other schools as well.

LION/14

China Bank posts 3rd straight year of record income, P2.71B for 2004

CHINA Banking Corp (China Bank) posted a record net income of P 2.71 billion in 2004, sustaining its strong performance from the P 2.62 billion posted in 2003. The Bank's resulting Return on Equity (ROE) remains one of the highest in the industry at 14.22 percent, while Return on Assets (ROA) of 2.44 percent was also an industry high. This is due to improved interest margins, turnaround in loan bookings, higher fee-based revenues and sustained contributions from China Bank's Trust and Treasury-related business.

NPL ratio improved to 11.40 percent from last year's 14.69 percent. China Bank's loan loss coverage ratio (ratio of loss reserves to NPLs) improved to 87.83 percent, the highest among local banks, as the P785 million in loss provision for the year brought the total loan loss reserves to P 6.75 billion.

China Bank's total resources stood at P117.24 billion, above the P104.45 billion of the previous year. Total deposits hit P85.85 billion boosted by the faster growth in its low-cost Casa deposits. Total loans reached P51.44 billion, a P10.17-billion increase from 2003, and signaling a reversal of the stagnant loans trend in recent years.

It also continued to be the best capitalized bank in the industry with total capital funds hitting the P20-billion milestone for the first time at P20.32 billion. The capital adequacy ratio of 32.74 percent is also above-average compared to the 10-percent minimum of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP).

Recently, Fitch Ratings, an international rating agency, has affirmed the individual ratings on China Bank at "C/D". According to Fitch's published report on the Bank, China Bank's individual rating was based on the bank's high level of capital and adequate profitability.

China Bank also expanded its ATM network with 12 new off-site ATMs. To date, there are 190 ATMs with many off-branch locations in strategic sites such as shopping malls and MRT stations. Also, in celebration of its upcoming 85th year milestone, China Bank is offering a bank-wide raffle promo dubbed as "Grateful at 85". The promo gives away more than P6.5 million in prizes, tax-free. For more information, call 885-5555 or visit any China Bank branch.

May your business grow
as the wood rooster crows...

恭喜
發財

Kong Hsi Fa Chai!

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Wood Rooster with **China Bank's**
Grateful at 85 Anniversary Promo, and
get a chance to win
₱2.85 Million!
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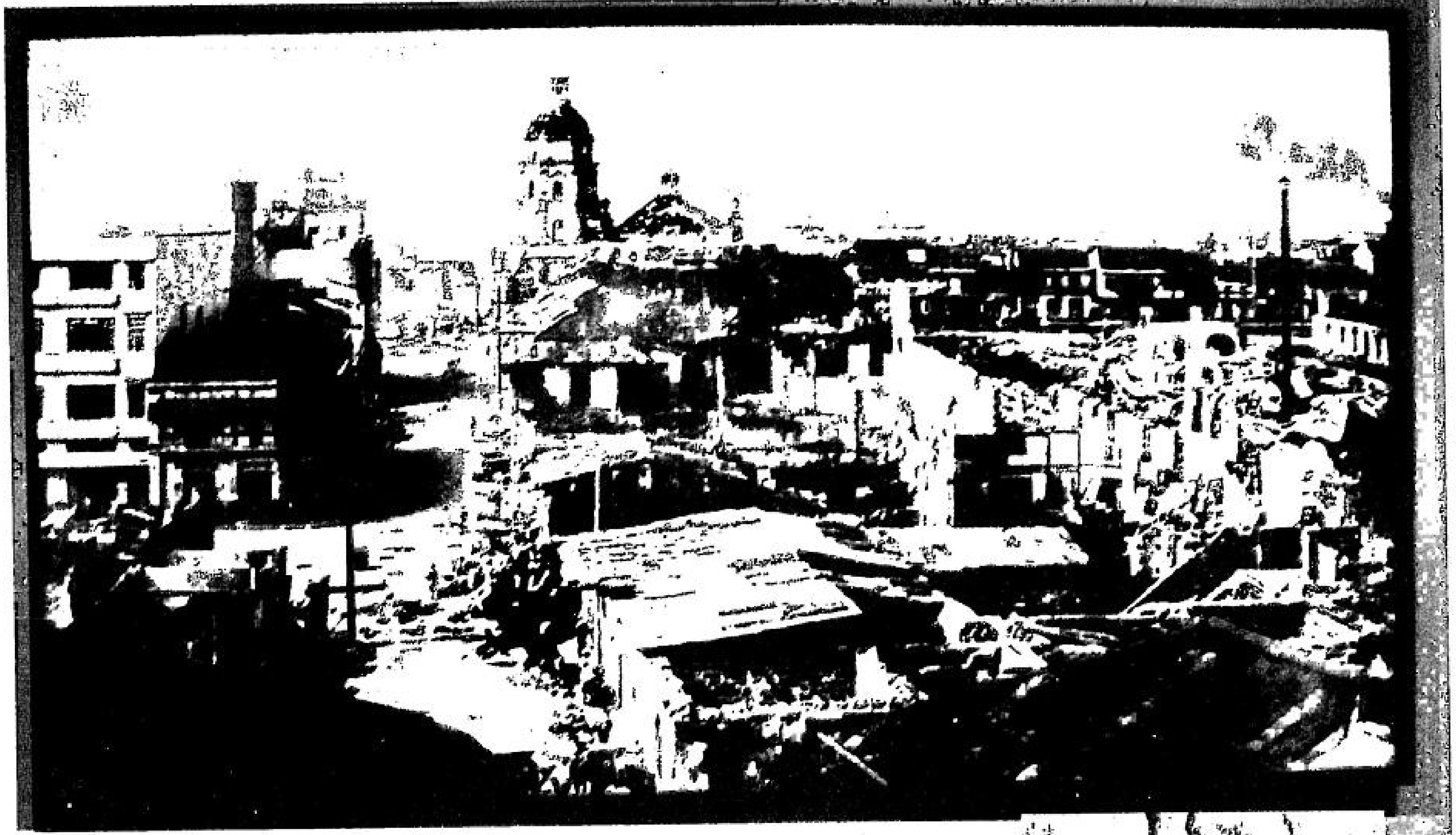
BAHAY TSINOY

HISTORY in the eyes of CHINESE-FILIPINOS



RUINS of Intramuros after the bombing of Manila

Text and photos
By Marlet D. Salazar

THE ORIGIN of noodles may have come from China, but *pancit canton* is uniquely Filipino. *Tokwa* is very Chinese but *tokwa't baboy* is proudly Pinoy. Tsinoy is often used to refer to Chinese living in the Philippines and often we fail to see the "Noy"-meaning they are Filipinos, too.

Bahay Tsinoy is not just another museum for the Chinese. It is also for Filipinos as it tells the history of the Philippines in the Chinese perspective.

"It was built for us Tsinoys to be seen as an ethnic minority in the Philippines," said Meah See, director for museums of Kaisa Para Sa Kaunlaran.

Kaisa Para Sa Kaunlaran Inc is an organization composed of Chinese-Filipino businessmen who hold seminars and workshops on livelihood opportunities for the less fortunate. It is also involved in other socio-civic activities.

Bahay Tsinoy is an original idea of Teresita Ang See's husband, the late Chinben See.

"He has seen how other minorities in other countries had been accepted of the mainstream culture," said Ang See, founding president of Kaisa. "He wanted a center that would be a repository of the imprints of the Chinese-Filipino in all aspects of Philippine life."

According to Ang See, Chinben wanted to emphasize in the center that although the Chinese origin is alien, "it had become part and parcel of this country; and that their fate had been intertwined with the local inhabitants."

Bahay Tsinoy opened to the public in 1999. It is located at the Angelo King Kaisa Heritage Center in Intramuros, Manila

"There are many things in the museum that are so Filipino to the Filipino but then you'll find out that their origin is from China," said Ang Chak Chi, president of Kaisa.

The museum is divided in major clusters: Early Contacts, The Parian, Colonial Culture: Shared Hands, Emergence of the Chinese Community, In Defense of Freedom, Sari-Sari Store and Tool Shed, Mestizo House: Sala, Mestizo House: Bedroom and Kitchen, National Leaders of Chinese Descent, Gallery of Rare Prints and Photographs, Martyrs Hall, Porcelain Collection, Tsinoys in Nation Building, and Rare Philippine Shell Collection.

It traces the relationship between the Filipinos and Chinese since the pre-Hispanic times up to the present. Dioramas, artifacts, interactive computer touch screens, photographs, and other visual aids would further help visitors understand a part in the history that had little mention in the books.

"It tells of the period of Philippine history," See said, "that what happened to the Filipinos also happened to the Chinese. You will see that everything in their lives is intertwined."

In August 2002, the third floor opened with the addition of a feature on contemporary Tsinoys who are involved in nation building.

A replica of a sampan vessel is easily noticeable at the right corner at the entry to the museum. The sampan was used by the Chinese to transport trade wares here. The diorama of the 1603 Chinese massacre in Parian would tickle your interest further.

The museum also explains that when the trading abilities of the Chinese became evident during the Spanish era, they were confined in Parians. These are Chinese ghettos scattered all over the country. It was first established in 1582 outside Intramuros.

"A hologram presented in four languages—Tagalog, English, Hokkien or Fookien, and Mandarin—explains the journey or evolution of the Chinese to Chinese mestizo, to Tsinoy, and finally to a Pinoy," according to Ang.

Another notable section is the one where prominent people in the history who are of Chinese descent. The illustrated family tree of national hero Jose Rizal confirms that he has Chinese blood. First Filipino saint Lorenzo Ruiz was born to a Chinese father and a Filipino mother. Mother Ignacia del Espiritu Santo was also a Chinese *mestiza*.

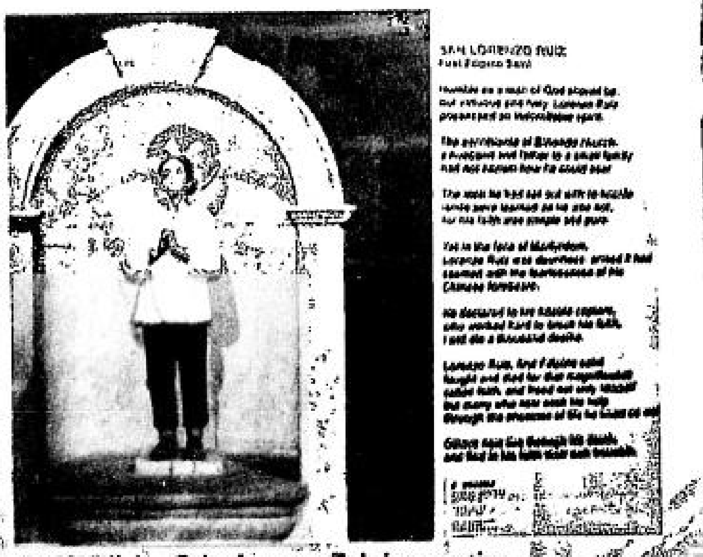
Most of the items in Bahay Tsinoy were donated by families and other institutions. Handwritten letters, weapons during the war, books, and even age-old pieces in the house were contributed.

The influence of the Chinese culture is also evident in several architectural imprints. The gates of San Agustin Church reveal stone lions, traditional symbols of protection against evil of the Chinese.

The Virgin of Caysasay is also referred to as Ma-tzo, goddess of seafarers.

Contemporary Tsinoys have their rightful place in the museum. However, the selection of who will be featured is quite tricky, according to Ang. There may be prominent personalities that a visitor feels earns a rightful place there, but a committee has established categories that would justify the inclusion of those personalities.

By its physical size, Bahay Tsinoy may be relatively small but its richness in information and eye-opening trivia ultimately gives museum-goers a reason to take a peek at Philippine history in the eyes of the Tsinoy—the Chinese who is Filipino or the Filipino who is Chinese.

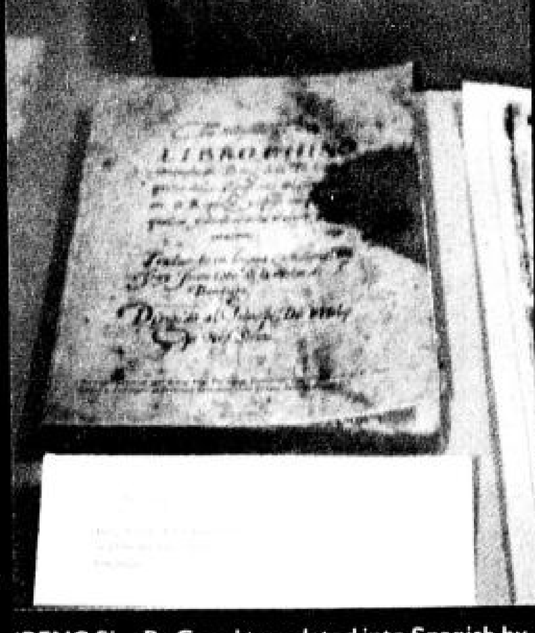


FIRST Filipino Saint Lorenzo Ruiz is a mestizo son of a Chinese father and Filipino mother

CHINESE meat vendor

CHINESE cobbler (left) and public reader

GEN. JOSE Ignacio Paua, the only pureblood Chinese general in the Philippine revolution



'BENG Sim Po Cam,' translated into Spanish by Padre Juan Cobo in 1590, is the fist Chinese classic translated into a European language.

DIORAMA of the 1603 Chinese massacre in Parian.

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BAHAY TSINOY

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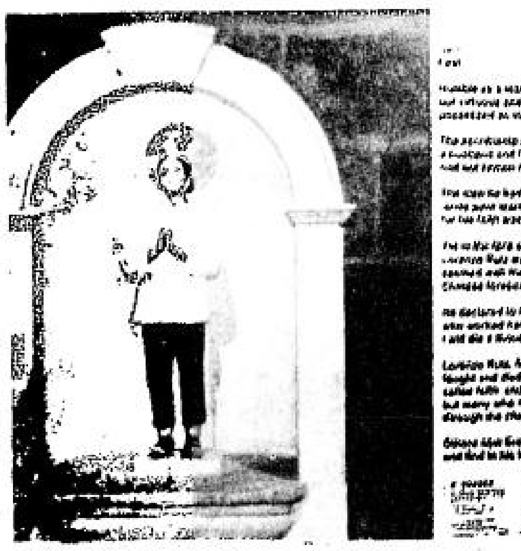

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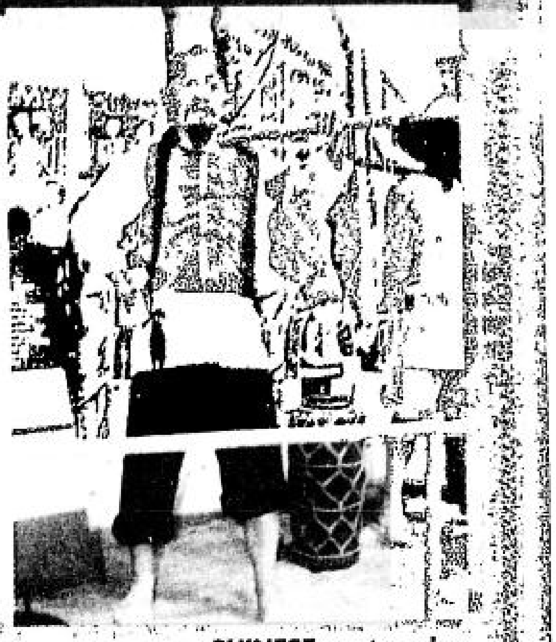

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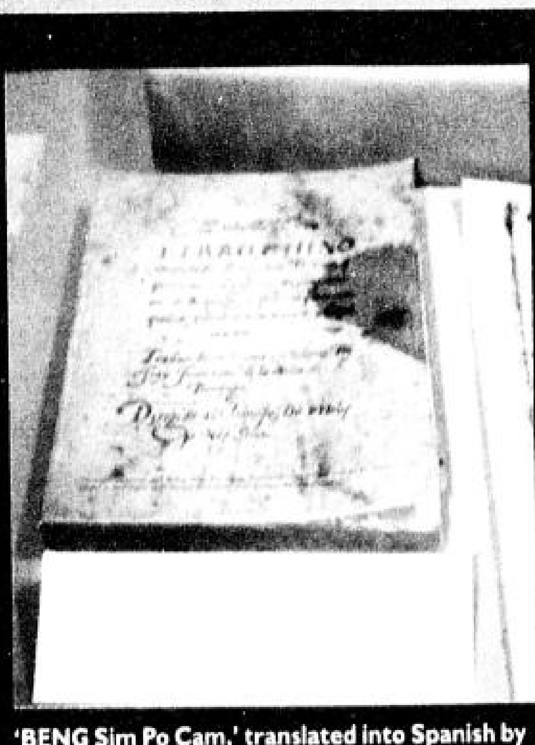

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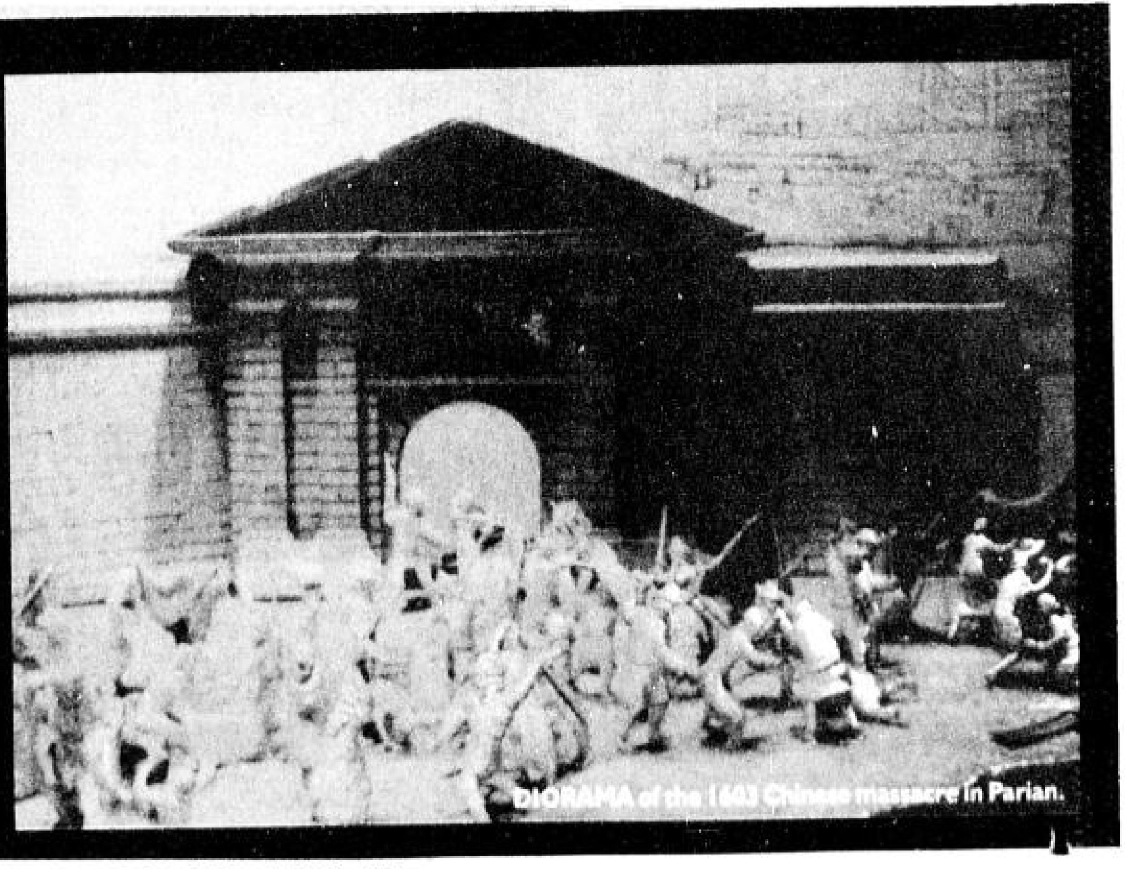

DIORAMA of the 1603 Chinese massacre in Parian.

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The dance of the DRAGON

PHOTO BY RAQUEL GOMEZ

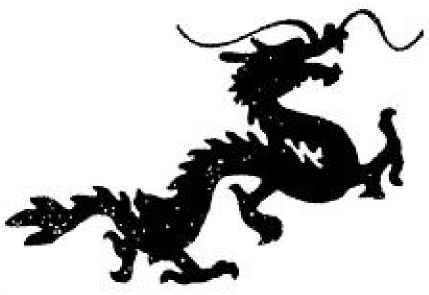
GREEN, which symbolizes great harvest, is usually selected as the main color of the dragon.

BESIDES the lion dance, the dragon dance is another popular activity during Chinese New Year.

According to ancient history, during the period of Chun Chiu, Chinese martial arts was very popular and the dragon dance was taught to students of Chinese martial arts to encourage them to learn the craft more.

The Chinese dragon, which looks very fierce, resembles different animals such as the horns of a stag, the head of a camel, the ears of a cow, the eyes of a rabbit and the scales of a carp.

The size and length of a dragon depends on the humans who will carry it, budget and materials, skills it can do, and the size of the field where it will perform.



Its length ranges from seven sections to 13 sections long. Some dragons are as long as 46 sections. But the normal length and size of the body recommended for the dragon is 112 feet and is divided into 9 sections. The distance of each section is 14 inches apart, therefore, the body has 81 rings.

The dragon dance is performed in different ways and even the color and type of the dragon varies accordingly. Green, which symbolizes great harvest, is usually selected as the main color of the dragon. A dragon, which dons a yellow color, symbolizes the solemn empire. Golden or silver colors symbolize prosperity; red dragon represents excitement while its scales and tail are mostly beautiful silver color that glitters at all times which provides a feeling of joyous atmosphere.

Combination and proper timing of the movements of the different parts of the dragon is essential to make the dance beautiful. The one who controls the head of the dragon (called pearl of the dragon) must be able to coordinate his movements with the movements of the people who hold the body in harmony with the beats of the drums.

The patterns of the dragon dance are changed according to the skills and experiences acquired by the performers.

Some of the patterns of the dragon dance are cloud cave, whirlpool, tai-chi, threading the money, looking for pearl, dragon vomiting the pearl, dragon encircling the pillar, etc.

The movement "dragon chasing the pearl" figuratively shows the dragon is continually in the pursuit of wisdom.

Information taken from www.visitsarawak.com

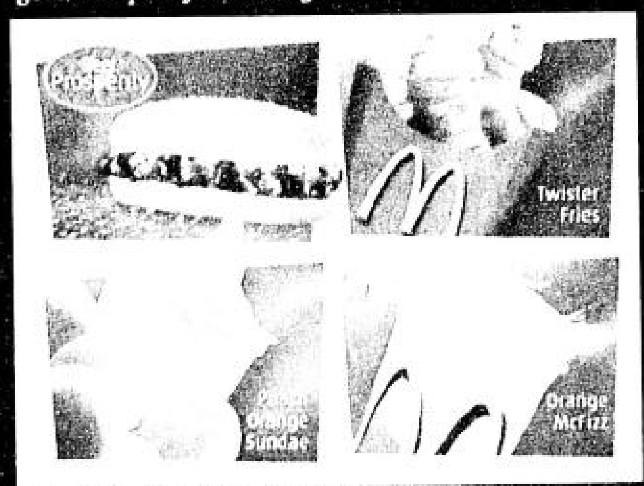
Welcome 2005 with Prosperity Burger

MCDONALD'S welcomes 2005 by offering its customers the Prosperity Beef Burger: 100-percent pure beef patty, glazed with black pepper sauce, and garnished with fresh onion bits.

The Prosperity Beef Burger may be enjoyed either a la carte or as a meal with a Peach Orange Sundae, an Orange McFizz, Twister Fries, or a regular Coke!

That's not all! Customers can also purchase Lucky Chums premium items at P58 with any food order. Lucky Chums come in 12 designs representing the Chinese calendar zodiac animals. Collect all 12 Lucky Chums and have a lucky and prosperous 2005 up ahead. The Collectors kit, a handy box to display your Lucky Chums collection, is also available.

So what are you waiting for? Rush to your nearest McDonald's restaurant or dial 8-McDo (8-6236) and get a Prosperity Beef Burger now!



DOT expects influx...

From page H4

sultative meeting with concerned government agencies-the Bureau of Immigration, the Manila International Airport (MIAA) public affairs office, and the DOT Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) office-and travel and tour operators handling the China market.

Two additional passes will be given to travel and tour operators, granting them access to areas of the airport where they can meet the tour groups.

Via DOT's "Meet and Assist" program, Mandarin-speaking interpreters will be on hand at all times to respond to any queries or concerns the tourists may have.

The Chinese New Year is one of the three major seasons for the Chinese tourist market. Arrivals also peak during the Spring Festival in May and the Chinese National Day in October. Traditionally, tour groups prefer Manila and Cebu, but Boracay and Palawan are emerging as alternative destinations.

According to the local China Tourism Development Agency, this year's festivities include a parade of floats featuring the participation of leading individuals and organizations belonging to the Filipino-Chinese community. Revelers can also look forward to several cultural shows, a martial arts demonstration, and a 36-string puppet show from Quangxhou, as well as fireworks displays and a Chinese Food Fest.

> Tourist arrivals from China have been increasing by some 40 percent annually. This number is forecast to hit 300,000 by 2010

THE BIGGEST CIRCLES FOR GOOD LUCK!
Enchanted Kingdom
Feel the Magic

At Enchanted Kingdom, you'll find the biggest circles for good fortune in the Year of the Rooster! Bring the whole family and witness the special dragon and lion dance and wushu exhibition on February 12 and 13. Be one of the lucky guests to receive ang pao envelopes with Php 80 cash coupons from February 9 to 13. So scream, loop, circle your way to a happier New Year!!!

Park Schedule
January 10 to March 27, 2005
Monday - Tuesday, Closed
Wednesday - Friday, 10:00 AM - 7:00 PM
Saturday & Sunday, 10:00 AM - 10:00 PM
Fireworks display every weekend at 9 PM

Shuttle Service Schedule
January 10 to March 27, 2005
Wednesdays to Fridays:
10:30 AM (Ayala Center Terminal to EK)
7:00 PM (EK to Ayala Center Terminal)
Saturdays, Sundays & Holidays:
10:30 AM/12:30 PM (Ayala Center Terminal to EK)
7:00 PM/10:00 PM (EK to Ayala Center Terminal)

Admission Tickets
EK Day Pass Php 500 Weekend/Holiday
Php 400 Weekday
Child/Senior Day Pass Php 320 Weekend/Holiday
Php 250 Weekday
Carousel Special Php 100
Buy only from authorized ticket outlets: Makati Sales Office, Park Front Gate & Ticketworld outlets.

For inquiries, please call 8302111 to 16 or 8436073 to 78 or visit www.enchantedkingdom.com.ph. Enchanted Kingdom is a proud member of International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions.

IAAPA MEMBER

The LION DANCE spectacle

From page L1

But beyond the art and cadence of the dance, the lion dance combined with the *wushu* or Chinese martial arts is able to teach students "self-defense, discipline, the virtue of chivalry and respect," according to Queri.

He said the steps of the lion dance are derived from *wushu*. The lion dance, however, has its significance and popularity associated with Chinese New Year and Chinese special occasions.

"It symbolizes the bringing of good luck and prosperity in the year to come for all the human beings on earth," said Queri.

According to Queri, lion dancers are often invited by business establishments to perform for them to bring in good luck. "The more money you put in the red envelope to be given to the lion, the more prosperity will come to your business."

The tradition of the lion dance has had a long history in China, recorded over thousands of years. In the Tang dynasty, the lion dance was performed by a group of five lions of different colors. Each lion was followed by 12 men dressed in colorful costumes, with a red band around the forehead and a red colored brush in hand. These people were called "lion-men" and they danced in tempo to the musical pieces called "Tai-pin" melody.

The lion dance was initially entertainment for the nobility, which gradually spread to the army and finally to civilians.

There are different legends about the origin of the lion dance. One story tells of a lion appearing in a small village and causing harm to the people and their animals.

A Kung-Fu expert learned about the lion and went to the mountain to capture it. He encountered the lion on three occasions but was unable to capture it.

So he went back to the village and taught some of the villagers Kung Fu with the intention of bringing these martial arts-trained villagers back to the mountain to kill the lion.

A few months later, they went up to the mountain and finally killed the lion. The villagers, in order to celebrate the occasion, followed the steps of those who fought the lion, thus the "lion dance" was created.

Another legend goes that the emperor of China during the Ching Dynasty had seen a lion dance in one of his dreams, and when he woke up, he ordered the guards of the palace to dance according to what he had dreamt.

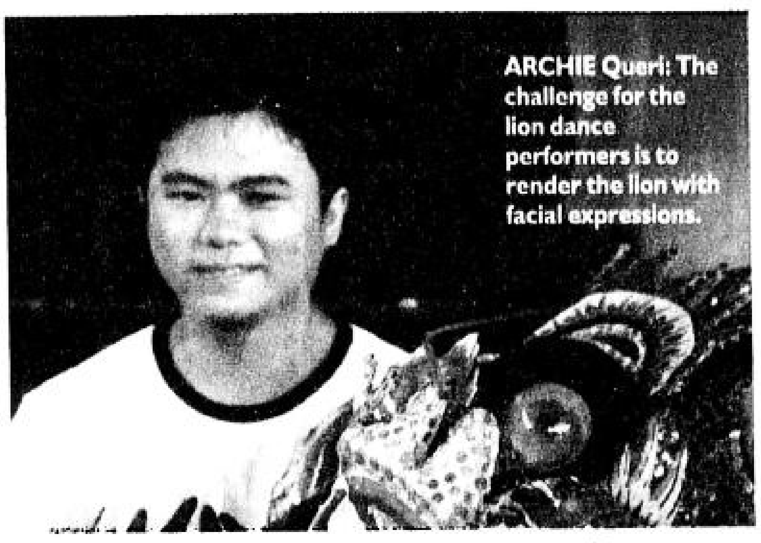
A closer look at the lion used for the lion dance, one sees that it doesn't resemble a real lion at all—because China does not have lions and the description of lions by the Chinese nobles was derived from their imaginations.

Chinese temples all over China and overseas have these imaginative lion sculptures placed in the frontages. These lions are far from the true likeness of a real lion because real ones have no horns.

In China, the lion dance is performed differently in various places. The appearances of the lions differ as well.

In Northern China, the body of the lion is full of hair except at the head. It looks more like the real lion and the performers usually dance in pairs.

In Southern China, the lion's appearance is far removed from reality because it is made of multi-colored pieces of linen. They dance individually and never in pairs.


ARCHIE Queri: The challenge for the lion dance performers is to render the lion with facial expressions.

KUNG HEI FAT CHOI!

May the prosperous winds of change guide your goals and dreams this year. May the Year of the Rooster be as refreshing and cheerful as the rooster's brilliant crow each day.

Call 849-9888
visit www.sunlife.com.ph

In the Philippines, Sun Life Financial is represented by Sun Life of Canada (Philippines), Inc., offering life insurance products, Sun Life Asset Management Company, Inc., manager and distributor of Sun Life Prosperity Funds, and the Sun Life Financial Plans, Inc., offering pension and education plans.

4th Q net more than doubles for Canada's Sun Life

Sun Life Financial Inc said fourth-quarter net income more than doubled and operating earnings rose 5 percent, as strong sales overcame the negative effect of a strengthening Canadian dollar.

Fourth quarter net for Sun Life (NYSE,TSE:SLF) rose to C$438 million, or 74 cents a share, from C$206 million, or 34 cents a share, a year earlier. Operating earnings rose to C$438 million, or 74 cents a share, from C$417 million, or 69 cents a share. Sun Life said operating earnings took a hit of C$15 million, or 3 cents a share, from an appreciating Canadian dollar against the US dollar.

Per-share earnings for the quarter also were helped by a share repurchase program, in which Sun Life paid an average of C$39.05 a share to buy back 5 million shares. For the year altogether, Sun Life bought back 10.1 million shares.

Sun Life also redeemed $250 million in debentures in November 2004.

For 2004, net income rose 28.4 percent to C$1.68 billion, or C$2.81 a share. Operating earnings rose 14.5 percent to C$1.74 billion, operating earnings per share rose 16.4 percent to C$2.91, and operating return on equity rose to 12 percent from 10.6 percent.

"Strong earnings performance in Canada, the United States and Asia, and the share repurchase program, contributed to the 16-percent increase in operating earnings per share and the improvement in operating return on equity," said chief executive officer Donald A. Stewart in a statement. "Reflecting our continued positive financial performance and confidence in the outlook for the current year and beyond, the board of directors is increasing the quarterly common share dividend by 9 percent to 24 cents a share."

For Sun Life's Canada unit, fourth quarter net income rose 13 percent to C$250 million, on improved mortality experience in reinsurance and individual wealth products. Group benefits earnings improved on the strength of higher investment income, and group retirement services earnings improved on better mortality experience.

In the United States, fourth-quarter earnings rose 12 percent to US$76 million, but the earnings gain weakened to 1.1 percent when translated into Canadian dollars —C$93 million—reflecting weakening of the US currency. Annuity earnings rose US$6 million to US$45 million, as equity markets rebounded, and improved credit experience and a shift in product mix led to higher spreads.

Individual life earnings fell by US$1 million to US$19 million on a change in the mix of earnings and the related tax effect, Sun Life said. Long-term disability experience improved in the fourth quarter, contributing to a 33-percent rise in earnings for the group life and health segment, to US$12 million.

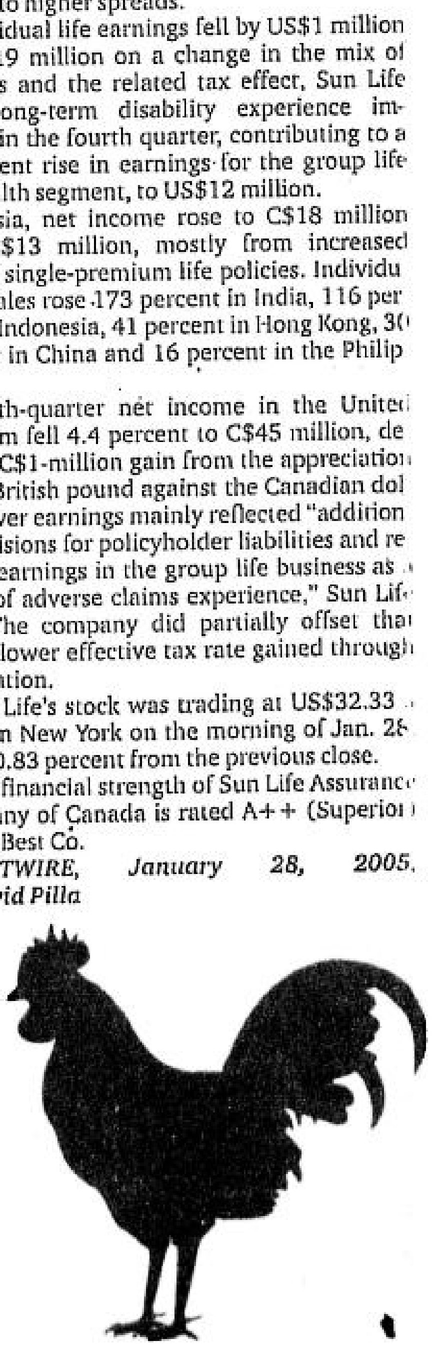
In Asia, net income rose to C$18 million from C$13 million, mostly from increased sales of single-premium life policies. Individual life sales rose 173 percent in India, 116 percent in Indonesia, 41 percent in Hong Kong, 3 percent in China and 16 percent in the Philippines.

Fourth-quarter net income in the United Kingdom fell 4.4 percent to C$45 million, despite a C$1-million gain from the appreciation of the British pound against the Canadian dollar. Lower earnings mainly reflected "additional provisions for policyholder liabilities and reduced earnings in the group life business as result of adverse claims experience," Sun Life said. The company did partially offset that with a lower effective tax rate gained through negotiation.

Sun Life's stock was trading at US$32.33 share in New York on the morning of Jan. 2 down 0.83 percent from the previous close.

The financial strength of Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada is rated A++ (Superior) by AM Best Co.

BESTWIRE, January 28, 2005,
by David Pilla



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From page 1

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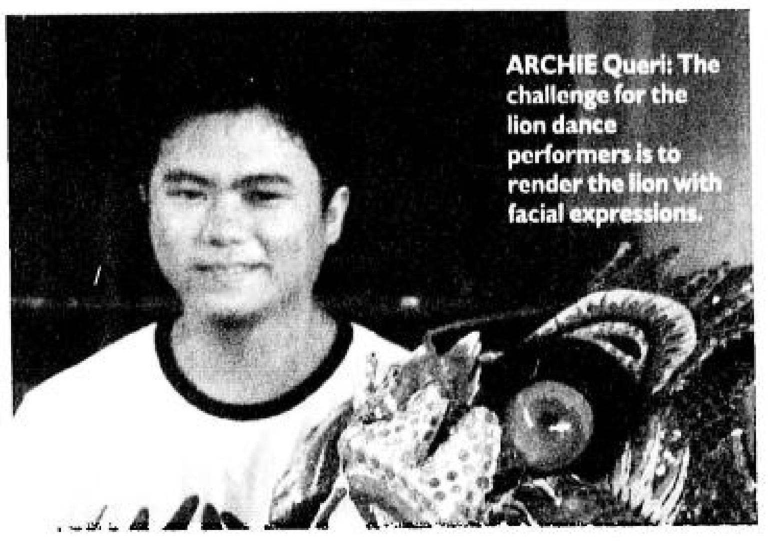

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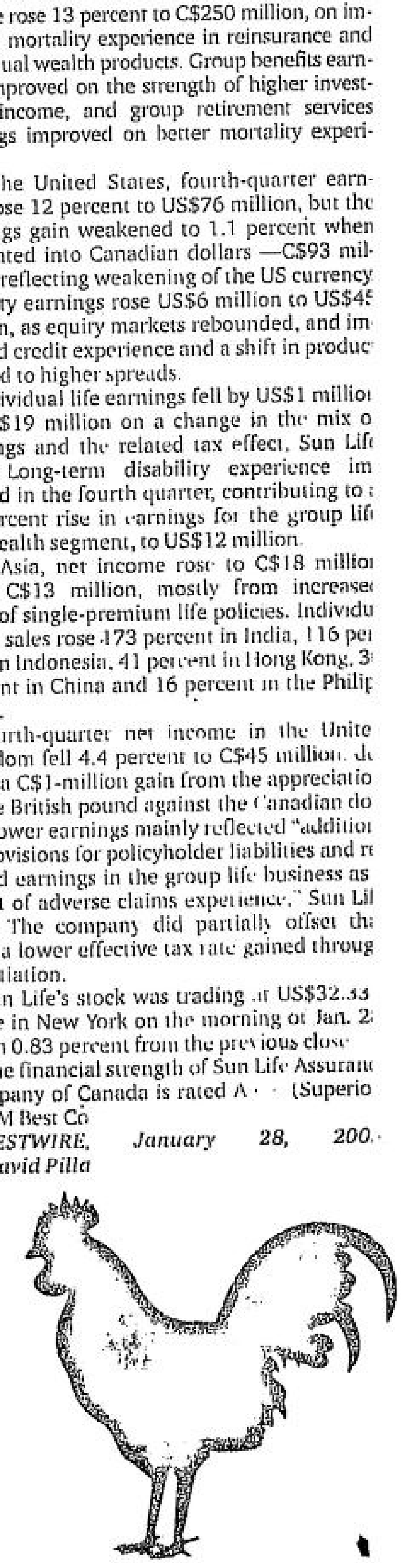

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48 YEARS

PUBLIC RELATIONS SOCIETY OF THE PHILIPPINES

One public relations Profession, one PRSP

Colleagues and friends, my heartfelt congratulations!

Through the years, we have witnessed officers and members unite and selflessly offer their time and talents to professionalize our country's PR and communications profession. The result was no less than a gift, not only to the PR industry but, more importantly, to the individuals, enterprises, and institutions we serve or represent. To earn the respect of our publics we must enhance our solidarity, collaboration, and constructive relationship. We must work as one. Our past achievements must not go to naught. It is only through unity that PRSP can be an effective instrument for progress - today or in the future. On the occasion of the 48th year of the PRSP, our professional call should be: one public relations profession, one PRSP.

Jones T. Campos, APR
President, PRSP

2004-2005 Board of Directors and Officers

Jones Campos, APR
President
Globe Telecom, Inc

Joel Lacsamana
Vice-President Internal
Manila Water Company

Dante Velasco, APR
Vice President External
Creative Point Intl., Inc.

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Carlos Agatep, APR
Agatep & Associates

Honesto Isleta, APR
Filipino War Veterans Foundations, Inc.

Maximino Edralin, Jr., APR
Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

Organization

The Society's strategic direction and policy is set by a nine-member Board of Directors, elected annually by members. The Board of Directors choose the Society's officers from among themselves, and appoint other members to head committees to carry out PRSP's mission. These committees are: the Anvil Awards, Membership, Finance, PR Education and Student Affairs, Ethics and Accreditation, External Relations, Publications and Social Outreach Services.

Professional Standards

PRSP firmly subscribes to the tenet that professional integrity is based on sound and ethical practice. Upon joining the Society, members agree to adhere to PRSP code of ethical standards in the practice of public relations.

In 1995, PRSP established a voluntary accreditation program. Members with at least three years of professional practice may earn "accredited" status by passing the written and oral examinations. Accredited status attests to a professional competency in the practice of public relations. Upon successful completion of the accreditation process, individuals may affix APR (Accredited in Public Relations) after their name. Accreditation may also be granted to deserving practitioners by the strength of their experience and track record in the profession. As accreditation is the centerpiece of a member's professional progress, this is maintained through continuing education and other relevant activities of the Society.

The annual Anvil awards, considered the "Oscar" of public relations, are given for excellence in public relations program institutional and corporate; and tools of public relations. Other major PRSP award is the "Gawad Panday" which recognizes an individual's significant contributions to the profession.

The Public Relations Congress is held every third week of September having been declared as National Public Relations Week by an Executive Order by then Pres. Fidel V. Ramos.

Election of the Board of Directors 2004 - 2005

Although the PRSP's By-Laws provide for yearly election of its Board, due to recent internal problems, no elections were held during the period January 2004 to September 2004. Upon the intervention of a Board of Convenors' composed of Mr. Maximino J. Edralin, Jr., APR of Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas; Mr. Carlos A. Agatep, APR of Agatep Associates, Inc.; Mr. George M. Balagtas, APR of Photokina Marketing Corporation; Mr. Elpi O. Cuna, Jr., APR of Manila Electric Company; Ret. Gen. Honesto M. Isleta, APR of Filipino War Veterans Foundation, Inc.; Atty. Melvyn S. Martin of Martin & Associates, Inc.; Mr. Pedro A. Padre, Jr., APR of P.A. Padre & Associates; Amb. Virgilio Q. Pantaleon, APR of Yuchengco Group of Companies; Mr. Bert P. Pasquin, APR of San Miguel Corporation and Mr. Leonides C. Valencia, APR former Coca Cola Bottlers Philippines Executive former PRSP presidents, and Mr. Eduardo S. Alcaraz of United Laboratories, Inc. and with the concurrence of the Securities and Exchange Commission, the election of the Board of Directors was held on Friday, September 17, 2004, with a large majority of the Society's members casting their votes.

Reaffirming Unity, Relevance and Professionalism

1957-2005

48 Years of Philippine Public Relations

To bring back the pride and dignity of the PR profession, the current PRSP leadership has declared that it be driven by five virtues: **transparency**, **professionalism**, **integrity**, **relevance**, and **excellence**. This is so because:

- PRSP is an organization that is collectively supported and nurtured by its members;
- PRSP is devoted to the advancement of and respect for the public relations profession;
- PRSP function as a training institute that prepares and mentors young professionals;
- PRSP is an advocacy group that seeks to identify the purposes and goals of its publics with the highest aspirations of the national community;
- PRSP is a forum where the finest and the best ideas are discussed for mutual enrichment among members and experts;
- PRSP is an association where its members can help one another as they make productive and rewarding careers; and
- PRSP is a Society where its members can have fellowship and enjoy each other's camaraderie, for talking shop and for the realization that its members share many things in common.

For what is moral, ethical and right - brings back genuine pride and dignity in the public relations profession; especially in PRSP.

Overview

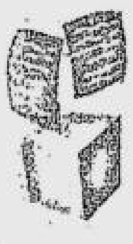
Every February 19 marks the Philippines' public relations profession's anniversary. Formally organized in 1957, the Public Relations Society of the Philippines (PRSP) is 48 years old this year. The PRSP is the country's premier organization of public relations professionals. It counts from its roster members who represent business and industry, government, counseling firms, NGOs, hospitals, schools, hotels and professional services, among others.

PRSP is a non-stock, non-profit organization by leading PR practitioners in the country. From its original general objective of "working for the advancement of the welfare of the Filipino people through the dignified, effective and relevant practice of the art and science of public relations", the Society's mission is now to advance the practice of the profession by:

a) uniting those engaged in the profession;
b) encouraging the continuing education of practitioners;
c) generating public confidence in the profession by promoting high ethical practice and encouraging high standards of public service;
d) playing the active role in all matters affecting the practice of public relations; and
e) strengthening the relationship of public relations professionals with employees and clients, with government at all levels, with NGOs, with communities, with educators, with the media, and the general public.

Forthcoming Events and Activities for 2005

- **1st PRSP Badminton Cup, February 12,** The Zone Badminton Courts, Malugay St., Makati City (former Toyota Bel-Air site)



- **Election of the Board of Directors - 2005-2006,** February 18, Dasmarinas Room, Hotel InterContinental Manila, Makati City
- **40th Anvil Awards Grand Awarding Ceremonies,** March 11, 2005
- **Professional Development seminar,** March 16, 2005, PNB Main, Diosdado Macapagal Avenue, Pasay City
- **12th National Public Relations Congress, 3rd week of September,** Public Relations Week
- **Quarterly General Membership meetings**

For inquiries or reservations, call 730-2627; 0917-898-4750, Ruth; or e-mail at prsociety04@yahoo.com

40th ANVIL AWARDS
"A Tribute to Excellence"

The Anvil Awards is the "Oscar" of public relations in the Philippines. It is won in competition - awarded by a distinguished multi-sectoral jury - to the outstanding public relations programs or projects designed or implemented in the past year.

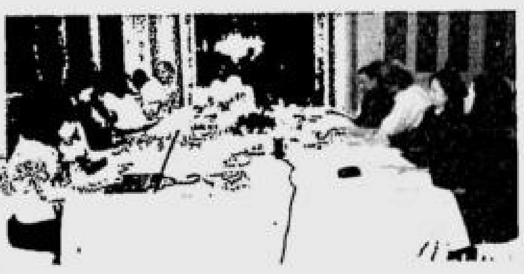
The Anvil Awards is conducted annually. There is no cash award given, but it is much coveted because the standards for winning are high, and no award is given unless such standards are met.

There are four award categories:

- Anvil Award of Merit
- Anvil Award of Excellence
- Bronze Anvil Award (for PR Tools)
- Grand anvil Award (for PR Programs)

Any public relations program or project implemented between October 31, 2003 and October 31, 2004 qualifies in this year's Anvil.

Started in 1963, the Anvil Awards has gained acceptance and prestige over the years. The awards are not given on the basis of the financial success, the social status or popularity of the winners, but on the strength of the long-range significance and impact of the PR programs or projects being undertaken on the social, political and economic situation of the nation.



For the 40th Anvil Awards, a group of thirteen (13) respectable professionals in the field of mass media arts, and public service - all with solid reputations for being uncompromising in their respective vocations - spent weeks in January individually going over seventy (70) entries to decide which would deserve the much-coveted Anvil.

They convened at the EDSA Shangri-La hotel last February 3, and the result of their deliberation showed their apparent commitment to excellence. Only twenty-seven (27) of the total number of entries passed their scrutiny. Of the nineteen (19) entries in the PR Tools category, only five (5) were given the awards of Excellence and four (4) Merit awardees. Of the fifty-one (51) entries in the PR Programs category, seven (7) were declared Excellence awardees and eleven (11) Merit awardees. From among the excellence awardees will emerge the Bronze Anvil Award and the Grand Anvil Award

Chaired by Senator Manuel A. Roxas, the 40th Anvil Awards Board of Jurors is composed of: Mr. Ryan Cayabyab, Ms. Rina Jimenez-David, Ms. Ces Drilon, Sec. Joseph Ace Durano, Mr. Mike Enriquez, Mr. Virgilio Galvez, Atty. Melvyn S. Martin, Dr. Cayetano Paderanga, Jr., Mr. Vergel Santos, Sec. Corazon Juliano-Soliman, Dr. Nicanor Tiongson and Mr. Leonides C. Valencia, APR

The audit and accounting firm of Punongbayan and Araullo were on hand to assist the judges.

The winners will be formally announced during the 40th Anvil Awards grand awarding ceremonies on March 11.

The 40th Anvil Awards Committee is composed of: Joel D. Lacsamana, Chairperson; Dulce Festin Baybay, Co-Chairperson; Rita R. Festin, Manny A. Gutierrez, Butch S. Raquel, Ritzi Villarico Ronquillo, Fely B. Rosales and Juris Umali-Soliman. The advisers are: Eduardo S. Alcaraz, Bert P. Pasquin, APR and Roel S. Ramirez, APR.

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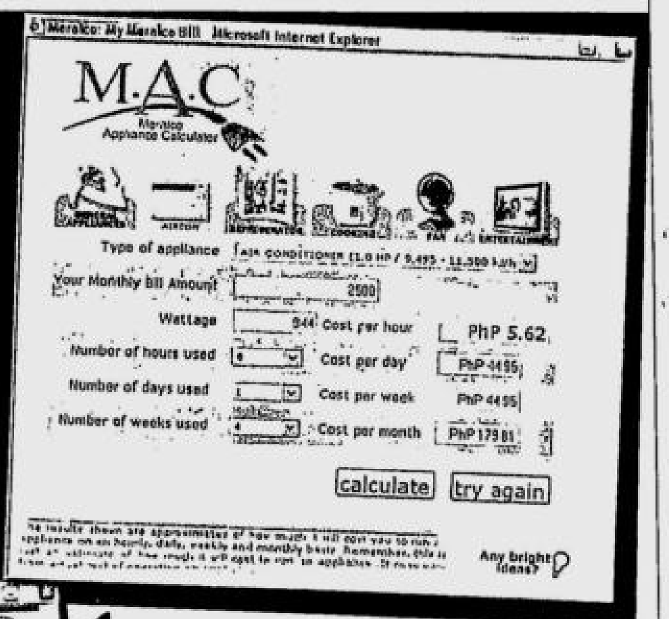
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Cost per week: PhP 44.95
Number of weeks used: 4
Cost per month: PhP 179.81

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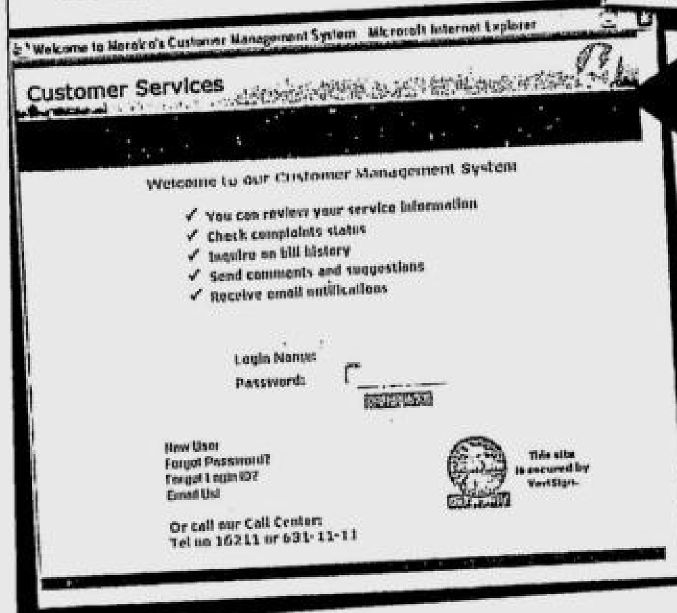
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48 years of eventful existence

RP's premier PR organization claims the future with a firmer grip of challenges and opportunities

THE RECENT challenges that the Public Relations Society of the Philippines (PRSP) has faced - and successfully dealt with - was a "wake-up call" to public relations and communications professionals, who suddenly saw the possibility of the diminution of a great and valuable organization.

PRSP is the association of public relations and communications leaders and executives in this country. And will remain so.

PRSP's inner strength

Today, after dealing with some people's desire to hold on to their positions against the majority's will - PRSP has remained strong. Those who entertained the idea that this great association will fall by its own weight of burdensome problems have been proven wrong.

Using the wisdom gained from hindsight, it can now be told that the little "furor" that visited the organization has, in fact, served as a catalyst to energize former presidents of PRSP, the select group of accredited PR professionals, as well as present and past members. They all came together to uphold the lofty ideals of the profession, to preserve its gains for close to half a century, and to secure a shared future with both young and old practitioners.

Mandate unchanged

The mandate of PRSP is unchanged. Only the landscape has been deeply altered, as we ushered in fast-changing technologies that have sped up communications and now exact more demands among communicators in the areas of telling the truth well, of adopting a policy of transparency, and of learning new disciplines in an increasingly multi-dimensional world.

PRSP remains as a non-stock, non-profit organization of leading PR practitioners in the Philippines to advance the practice of the profession in the following areas:

- Serve as a forum for united effort among professionals
- Use its global access to provide continuing education
- Promote uncompromising principles of ethical practice
- Encourage high standards in public service
- Play lead role in illuminating the function of public relations
- Strengthen its relationship with other sectors of RP Society
- Demonstrating the harmonizing role of PR in an increasingly conflict-oriented world

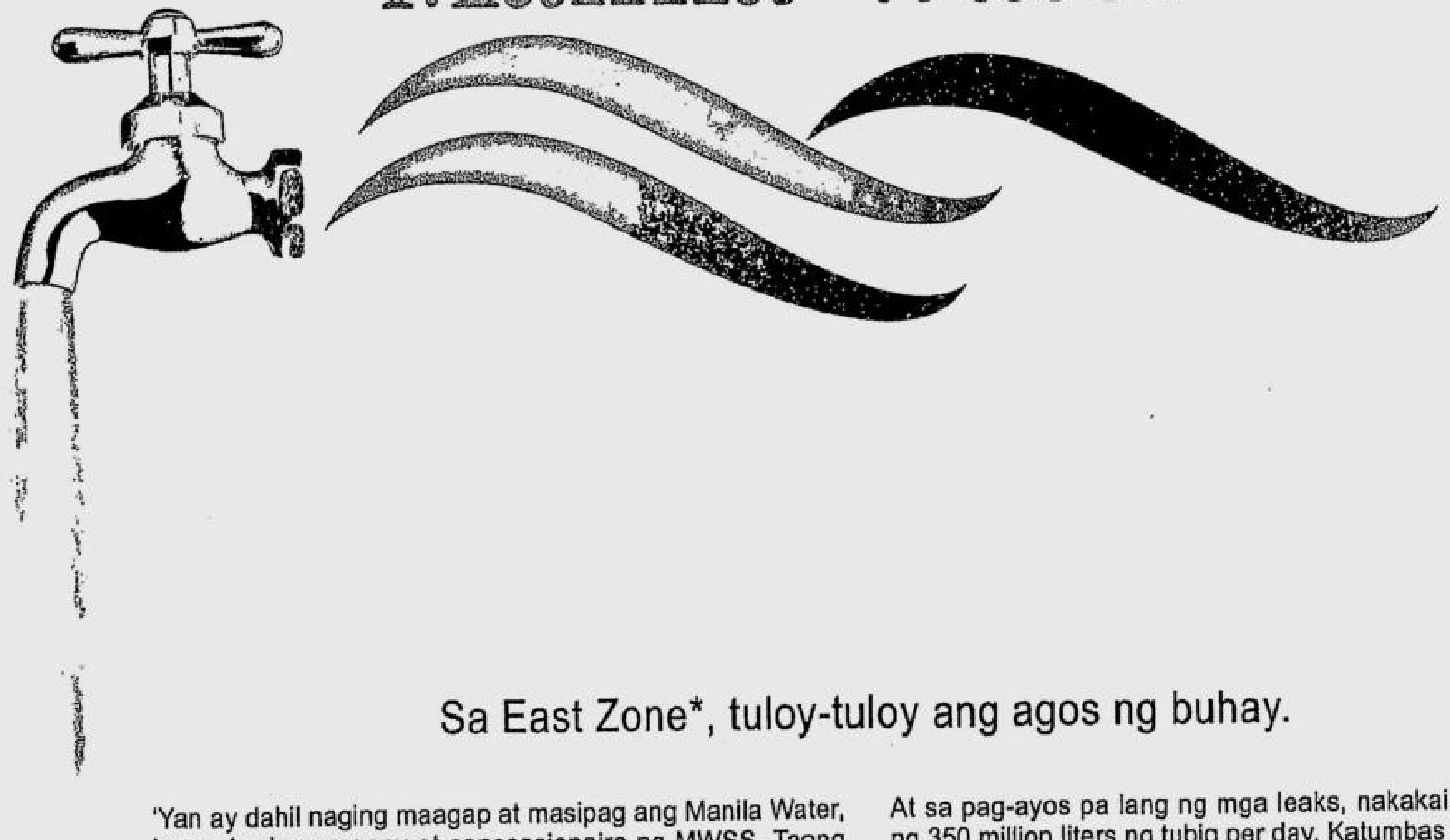
Organized formally in February 19, 1957, PRSP has expanded steadily through the years - with stalwarts taking turns in assuming leadership position solely driven by the desire to serve PRSP's membership which has grown in magnitude and complexity.

PR as a strategic management function

Due to the increasing need by corporations and organizations to address their constituencies, the discipline of public relations and communications has been extensively used with remarkable success. PRSP leaders were happy to see public relations executives in corporations standing shoulder to shoulder with other members of the management teams in terms of their strategic value to the firms and even manifested in much improved compensation packages.

EVENTFUL/J3

Manila Water



Sa East Zone*, tuloy-tuloy ang agos ng buhay.

'Yan ay dahil naging maagap at masipag ang Manila Water, isang Ayala company at concessionaire ng MWSS. Taong 1997 pa lang, sinimulan na ang mga hakbang upang masiguradong ang water supply ay laging sapat.

Una, naglaan ang Manila Water ng P19 bilyon para sa isang 5-year plan na mag-aayos hindi lamang ng mga sira't butas-butas na tubo ng tubig. Kasama rin dito ang pagpapalit at paglalagay ng makabagong water pipes.

At sa pag-ayos pa lang ng mga leaks, nakakaipon pa sila ng 350 million liters ng tubig per day. Katumbas ito ng dami ng tubig na ginagamit ng 350,000 pamilya sa isang araw.

Bukod dito, patuloy na naghahanap at nagde-develop ang Manila Water ng mga bagong pagkukunan ng tubig.

Kaya naman tag-ulan man o tag-araw, sa mga taga-East Zone, tuloy-tuloy ang agos ng tubig...at buhay.

*Marikina, Pasig, Mandaluyong, Makati, malaking bahagi ng Quezon City, San Andres at Sta. Ana sa Manila. Kasama rin dito ang San Juan, Taguig, Pateros, at Cainta, Taytay, Antipolo, San Mateo at Montalban sa Rizal.

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48 years of eventful . . .

From page J2

Independent public relations practitioners have likewise been elevated to the level of very important services - alongside traditional professions as law, accountancy, engineering and management consultancy. The independent PR practice has also grown by leaps and bounds due to the increasing need for building corporate image, communicating with constituencies, proactively dealing with communication-driven challenges, and waging advocacy campaigns.

A book titled "The Rise of PR and the Fall of Advertising" has captured the phenomenon that happened in the marketplace where credibility is established and new brands are build by PR. Such a change was not lost on far-seeing CEOs who now have a newfound respect for this multi-disciplinary profession.

Stronger after victory

It is thus with a touch of irony that, when PR was becoming the "darling" of the corporate world, an internal disagreement degenerated into a situation that created a vacuum in the leadership of the organization. However, well-meaning PRSP members, consistently governed by high ethical principles and respect for the rule of law, sought the ruling of the Securities and Exchange Commission, which thenceforth authorized the holding of an election.

In a display of remarkable unity and loyalty to PRSP as an indestructible organization, members coming from the country's top corporations and from leading and respected PR advisory companies came in droves to vote. The leader who sought to keep the presidency was isolated. The rest is heartwarming history - with PRSP stronger than before, and with leaders and members working together to claim a brighter, braver and wiser future.

PRSP Board of Directors for the year 2004 - 2005 taking their oath of office before Senator Alfredo S. Lim. (not in photo. Ms. Rochelle G. Hilario)

Globequest gave high five to clients

GLOBEQUEST, Globe Telecom's Wireline Business continues to delight its customers in creating relevant solutions for corporate customers based on ubiquitous, value-priced, high-speed data services over a nationwide broadband network.

Last month, GlobeQuest threw a party for its satisfied clients at the Rizal Ballroom of Shangri-La Hotel in Makati. Dubbed as "High Five", the event was a celebration of five decades of songs and dances from the 60's to the present.

Setting the mood was the welcoming of guests by no less than Marilyn Monroe and Elvis Presley impersonated. Sixties hits filled the room while guests dressed in their best costumes registered. Clients were treated to a buffet that lasted throughout the evening. Former VJ and model Bianca Valerio and Francis Ricafort hosted the affair.

After Gil Genio, CEO of Innove Communications delivered his welcome remarks, a medley of song and dances followed the program wherein Dance Sport showcased dances of the sixties like Waltz, Tango, Cha-cha, Samba, Rhumba, and other ballroom dances. For the seventies experience, impersonators of Diana Ross and Tina Turner took centerstage. A special number depicting the 80's era was GlobeQuest's very own "Hagibis" in their rendition of "Katawan" where Corporate Business Group head Boboy Romero played as one of the gigolos with the participation of Phoemela Beranda. DJ Boyet Almazan also played hits from the 80s that transported guests back to the era. Lastly, for the 90s, GlobeQuest Sales head Aries Sayson performed "Kool & the Gang" hits with the Aliw-Awardee showband Makemusic.com. Impersonators of J Lo and Kylie Minogue were also in the house to provide entertainment.

TV personality Phoemela Beranda partied with the guests including representatives from People Support, Dole Asia, Bank of the Philippine Islands, Philippine Airlines, McDonalds, PRA, WG&A, Amcham, among otheres. Phoemela was also on hand in the rafling of prizes. A CD compilation of hits from the 70s was given out to each guest as souvenir.

GlobeQuest has a reason to celebrate the commencement of 2004 with the following achievements: launching of Broadband Acess Services last March, GlobeQuest as first to provide Cebu with a direct connection to international cable facilities, introduction of Net Drive last May 6, the unwiring of the Waterfront Cebu Hotel being the country's 1st wi-fi hotspot hotel last July, the offering of Remote View, launching of the GlobeQuest Store Express last July, and the launching of Marco Polo Davao as the first Broadband Internet Zone (BiZ) hotel in Mindanao. (Menchie V. Osial).

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ANVIL Launching - 40th Anvil Awards Luanching held on October 27, 2004 at the Legend Villas, Mandaluyong City

PRSP Christmas Party - PRSP Christmas party held on December 9, 2004 at Restaurant 9501, ELJ Building, ABS-CBN Compound. Quezon City

. The officers of Public Relations Students Society of the Philippines (PRSSP) Communication Arts Department of De La Salle University – Dasmariñas were formally inducted into office by Mr. Bert P. Pasquin, APR past president of the Public Relations Society of the Philippines (PRSP) during the seminar as part of the celebration of the Media Awareness Day of the university. Dr. Mark Edwin T. Aspra, Associate Dean of College of the Liberal Arts witnessed the induction ceremony.

The Public Relations Students Society of the Philippines (PRSSP) Communication Arts Department - De La Salle University-Dasmariñas was recently organized. This is to encourage and promote the understanding of the theory, practice and techniques of Public Relations. The organization also aims to develop mutually advantageous relationship between students and PR professionals and increase their exposure with the industry.

Officers of PRSSP CAD-DLSUD are the following:

President
AGATHA TAPAN
Vice President for Internal Affairs
ROXANNE PREJOLA
Vice President for External Affairs
SEAN BACAY
Secretary
JOSEPH ROSAL
Treasurer
CARLA BAUTO
Auditor
KAREN NOVICIO

Globe Telecom launches GTAP

LEADING cellular phone provider Globe Telecom launched recently in Cebu City its nationwide industry-academe linkage program intended to promote student excellence in the fields of science and engineering.

Dubbed as the Globe Technical Advancement Program or GTAP, the program encourages hands-on training as an important extension to classroom learning through the use of digital technology and equipment that Globe is known for.

"Rapid technological development and exponential growth in the global telecommunication industry currently present exciting career opportunities for engineering students. Globe recognizes the need to prepare these students for the challenges ahead by providing them with leading-edge knowledge and skills via direct involvement in real-world engineering projects such as a simulated GSM network," said Gerardo C. Ablaza, Globe president and chief executive officer.

GTAP, he said, not only brings GSM (Global System for Mobile Communications) cell sites and equipment to the school but also offers a curriculum development module that will help integrate basic GSM information in the existing curriculum.

Likewise, select faculty members will be given training on the effective utilization of the equipment while graduating students of GTAP beneficiary-schools will be granted internship opportunities in Globe if they pass the requirements, he added.

Globe, through its IT/Telco School, will spearhead the training program with Globe line engineers as trainors.

On the other hand, participating schools will provide a personal computer, an area for the cell site as well as a room or laboratory to store the GSM equipment.

For its launch project, Globe partnered with the University of San Jose-Recoletos (USJ-R), the first university to positively respond to Globe's GTAP offer.

Founded in 1947 by the Order of Augustinian Recollects, then Colegio de San Jose-Recoletos developed from a small institution of learning to one of the excellent schools in the country. Its College of Engineering started in 1961 and in 2003, the College of Information, Computer and Communications Technology was created. On September 21, 1984, CSJ-R attained university status.

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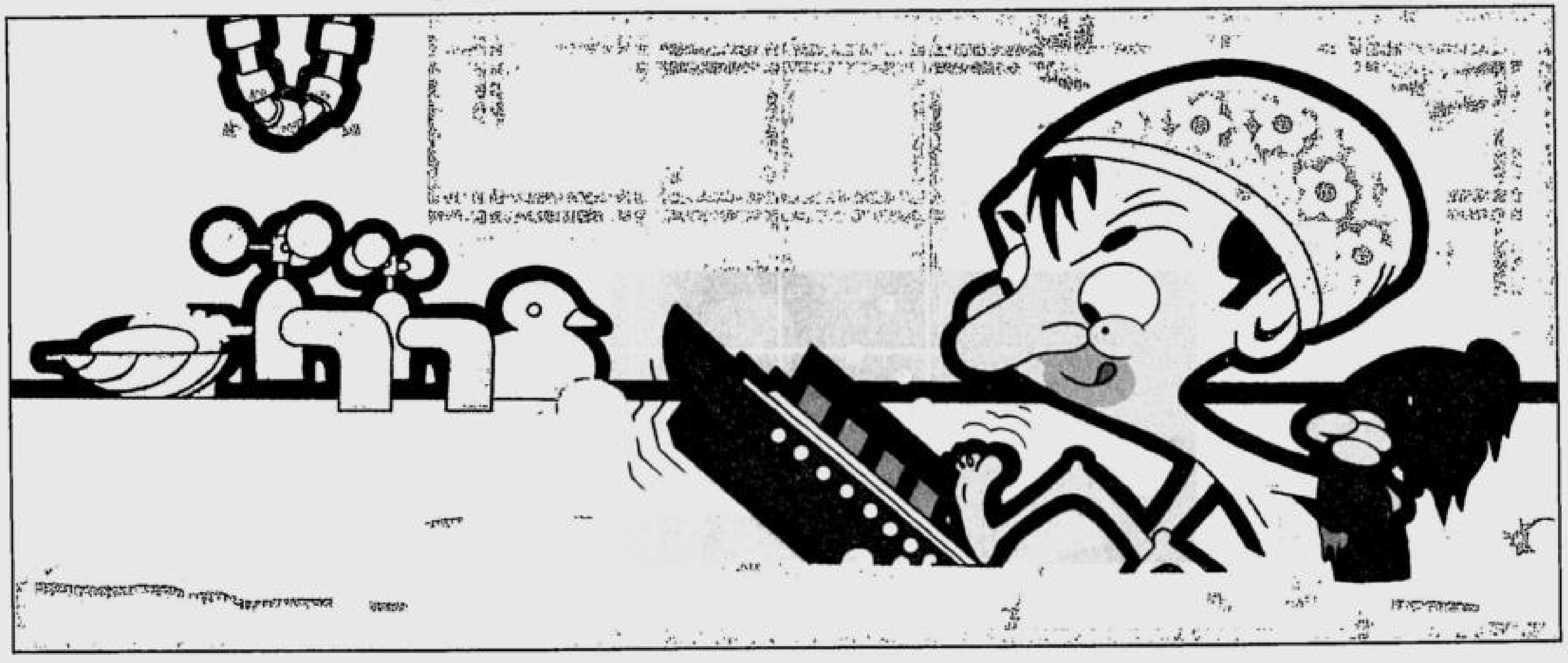

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3 remakes open today

Alfie

Distributed by Paramount Pictures
Directed by Charles Shyer
Stars Jude Law, Sienna Miller, Susan Sarandon, Marisa Tomei

IN THIS remake of Lewis Gilbert's 1966 film of the same title but which starred Michael Caine, Jude Law (People Magazine's 2004 Sexiest Man Alive) is Alfie, a womanizing British playboy in New York City who charms his way from one woman's bed (or limo) to another. When he gets two of them pregnant, he is forced to face the serious consequences of his carefree lifestyle.

Roger Ebert, in his review published Nov. 5, 2004, in the Chicago Sun-Times, said: "Alfie is still British in this version, but more upmarket, and now living in Manhattan, where his job as a limo driver gives him access to a lot of women, and they to him... We don't go to see 'Alfie' in order to make a sociological comparison of the two films; indeed, most of the audience members on opening night may not even know it's a remake. On its own terms, it's funny at times and finally sad and sweet. Alfie learns that to lie to women is to lie to himself about them. Law's best scenes are when he doggedly tries to keep smiling as his lifestyle grows grim and depressing. He's sold himself on life as a ladies' man, and is beginning to realize he is his only customer."

Flight of the Phoenix

Distributed by Twentieth Century Fox
Directed by John Moore
Stars Dennis Quaid, Giovanni Ribisi, Miranda Otto

ANOTHER remake, this time of the Robert Aldrich drama from 1965, where Jimmy Stewart gave one of his most underrated performances as the stern but compassionate leader of a pack of men stranded in the Sahara.

This time around, the cargo plane crashes in Mongolia's Gobi desert during a sandstorm and the survivors attempt to build a new plane from the parts they find in the wreckage. Captain Frank Towns, the plane's pilot played by Dennis Quaid, leads them to the promised land, or in this case, away from it.

Wesley Morris in his Dec. 17, 2004, review in the Boston Globe describes the movie as "a sporadically diverting thriller that has the personality of a Diet Coke ad."

There's more.

"So let me get this straight: The plane carrying you and your recently laid-off oil rig coworkers has just crashed somewhere in the Gobi desert. There's barely any water and all there is to eat are canned peaches and hearts of palm. Your only credible shot at salvation is to rebuild a new plane from the workable parts of the old one.

"There are sandstorms, electri cal storms, marauding Mongols, a mounting deadline, and the annoying fact that each of you seems like an item on a checklist of character types. But in spite of all this, you have time to whip out an iPod, play OutKast's 'Hey Ya!,' dance the robot, and bang on pipes? Is this an action movie, or 'Stomp?'

"That's the kind of picture 'Flight of the Phoenix' is: silly to the last drop of rationed water."

The Phantom of the Opera

Distributed by Warner Bros.
Directed by Joel Schumacher
Stars Gerard Butler, Emmy Rossum, Patrick Wilson, Minnie Driver, Miranda Richardson

WARNING: This movie is two hours and 23 minutes loooong.

A remake of the West End musical, songs from which most Pinoy hopefuls performed in auditions when Cameron Mackintosh came to town looking for his Kim. He found her in Lea "Miss Saigon" Salonga, but that's another movie.

This romantic musical epic is about a mysterious masked figure, Erik, played by Gerard Butler, who roams the undergrounds of 19th-century Paris and becomes obsessed tutoring a beautiful young soprano, Christine, played by Emmy Rossum. Christine upstages the city's most famous opera singer, Carlotta, played by Minnie Driver.

Mister Cranky on the Net wrote: "I had never been exposed to this Andrew Lloyd Webber ... before, but oh my God, was it boring. Who the ... goes to watch this stuff? If my audience was any indication, it's 80-year-old women who are hard-of-hearing. I just about fell asleep during the first 90 minutes of the movie.

"Is it just me or do the characters in this thing sing the same ... song like 50 times in a row? The only thing I remember from the whole thing was the Phantom's theme music. Other than that, it was like being stuck in an elevator listening to the Muzak versions of Michael Jackson's greatest hits.

"For what it's worth, the story takes place in Paris around 1870 in an opera house. Though the place has just been bought, the Phantom (Gerard Butler) lords over the theater, making casting decisions and whatnot from his mythical place in the rafters. He's instrumental in replacing Carlotta (Minnie Driver) with Christine. Unfortunately, Christine falls for Raoul and the Phantom begins to go mad, threatening to destroy both of them and the theater."

ANGEL and Richard

BEA and Piolo

Battle of pretty boys

FACE-OFF.

The duel starts today between screen heartthrobs Piolo Pascual and Richard Gutierrez.

Or it could be between their screen sweethearts Bea Alonzo and Angel Locsin, but this is less interesting.

More likely, it could be between their producers, Star Cinema (ABS-CBN) and GMA Films (GMA 7).

Piolo's Valentine starrer, "Dreamboy," opens today in theaters nationwide, as does Richard's "Let the Love Begin."

"Dreamboy" is produced by Star Cinema, "Let the Love Begin" by GMA Films.

Gilbert Perez directs "Dreamboy," from the screenplay by Katski Flores. It tells the story of a girl who dreams about a boy. Their paths cross one day, the promo materials say, "and the magic starts."

The same promo releases admit it is "the same old love story... but the characters are given new life." How so? The film is banking on the stars, "two of today's freshest, most exciting, most talented and most in-demand actors."

Which the other side would definitely contest, claiming the exact same description for the stars of its movie. After all, Richard and Angel, by virtue of age and residence in the business, are the "fresher" faces. "Exciting... talented... and in-demand?"

This will determine the result of the face-off of the week. Maybe of the next two weeks.

"This movie is for people in love, 'about to fall in love or ready to fall in love again after a heartbreak," publicists quote Perez as saying.

They also quote the lead stars trading praises.

Bea: "'Dreamboy' is a dream come true for me. Starring in a movie with Piolo is an honor. He is a true dream boy, the favorite fantasy of every girl, me included."

Piolo: "Among the new talents, Bea stands out. She's beautiful. She is only 17, but she is credible playing even a slightly older character."

Mac Alejandre directs "Let the Love Begin" from a screenplay by RJ Nuevas and Suzette Doctolero.

The story follows two couples "from the campus to the corporate world... as they face the challenges of growing up, from teenage to adult years."

Which places it on the same level as "Dreamboy," plot-wise. Then again, maybe the two movies can also be rated according to their theme songs: Christian Bautista does "So It's You" for the Star Cinema project, while Jerome John Hughes and Kyla do "Let the Love Begin" for GMA Films' bet.

What, even the theme songs are not original?

Attention: Zuma wannabes

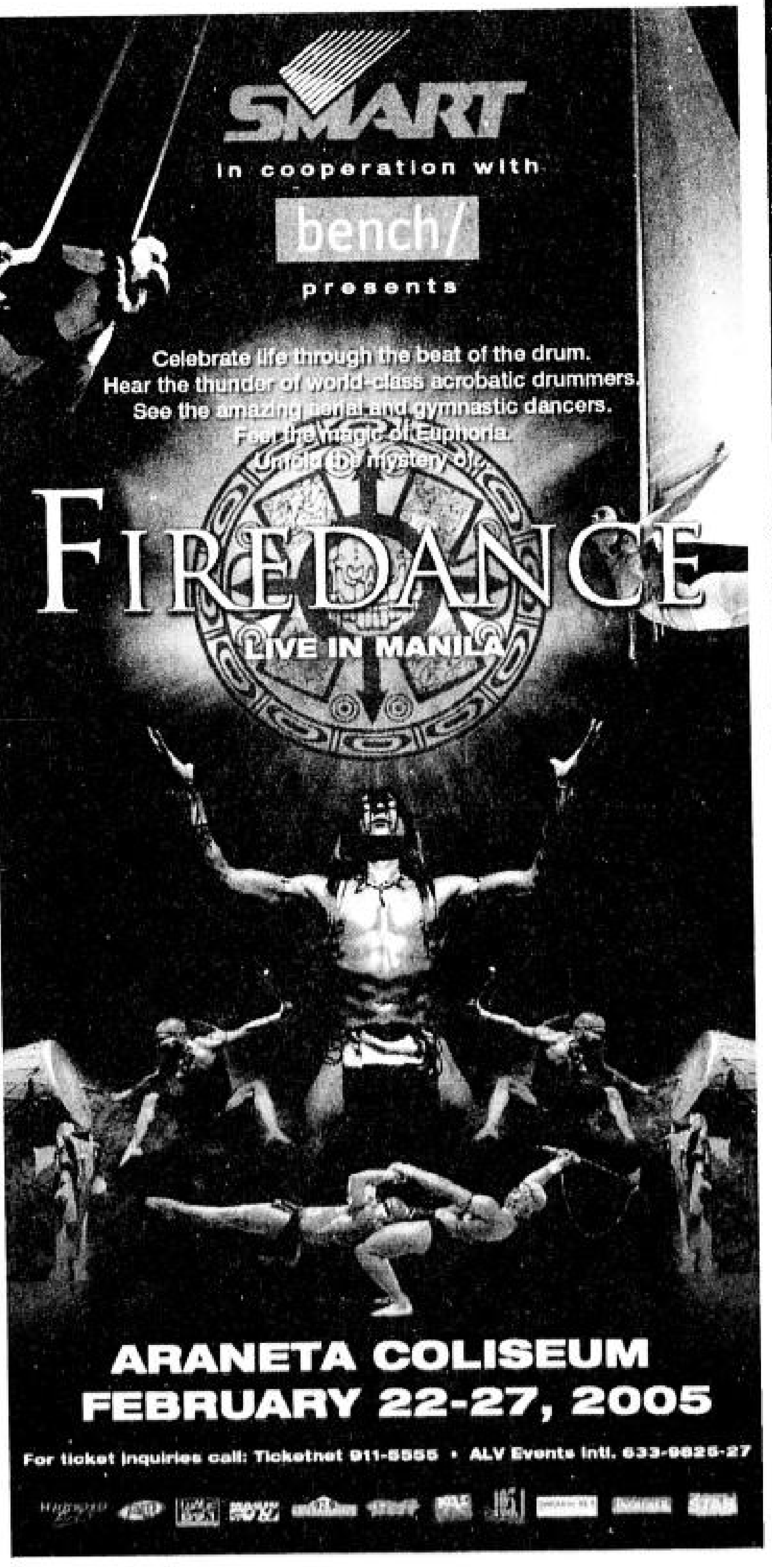
DO YOU look like Zuma?

The comic book antihero comes back to the big screen soon via a remake by director Ben "M7" Yalung for Cine Suerte.

"Zuma" was one of Cine Suerte's biggest hits in the 1980s. The comic book series told of the exploits of a snake-man created by Jim Fernandez.

But first, CS is conducting a search for the lead role. Open to aspiring actors aged 20 to 27, the auditions are set Feb. 16-20, 2-6 p.m., at Cine Color Studios, 185 Edsa near the corner of Ortigas (next to the POEA building).

For inquiries, call 723-2435.



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MARCO SISON

REY VALERA

Rico J, Rey Valera, Marco Sison at Casino Filipino

CASINO Filipino in Angeles City presents "King of Hearts at the Casino," a special Valentine concert top-billing Rico J. Puno, Rey Valera and Marco Sison, on Feb. 16.

The trio is set to sing all-time favorite love songs and OPM classics. Each one will also serenade the audience with their respective hit songs—Rico J's "Kapalaran," "Lupa," and "The Way We Were"; Marco's "Make Believe" and "Si Aida, Si Lorna O Si Fe"; and Rey's "Maging Sino Ka Man," "Kung Kailangan Mo Ako," and "Pangako Sa'yo."

Sultry actress-singer Alicia Meyer gives the show a naughty twist as special guest.

"Kings of Hearts" is a spin-off of the highly successful "The Great Hitmakers" concert tour, which brought the three (together with Nonoy Zuñiga and Hajji Alejandro) to key US cities, as well as in Sydney and Melbourne in Australia, Hong Kong, and Dubai. These were all sold-out performances and critical successes, and bagged for them the 17th Aliw Award for Best Major Concert (Collaboration) in August last year.

"The tour made us closer to each other," says Marco.

"We evolved and became better performers," Rey adds.

Rico agrees: "Onstage and off, we've become like a basketball team. The routine, including the jokes, is now automatic."

The show is the second venture of Prismwork, the production outfit established by show biz couple Romnick Sarmenta and Harlene Bautista.

Tickets are priced P1,500 and 1,200, inclusive of pre-show cocktails, a P300 casino coupon, and a rose for each lady guest.

Show time is 9 p.m.

SHOW TIME

'Love Letters'

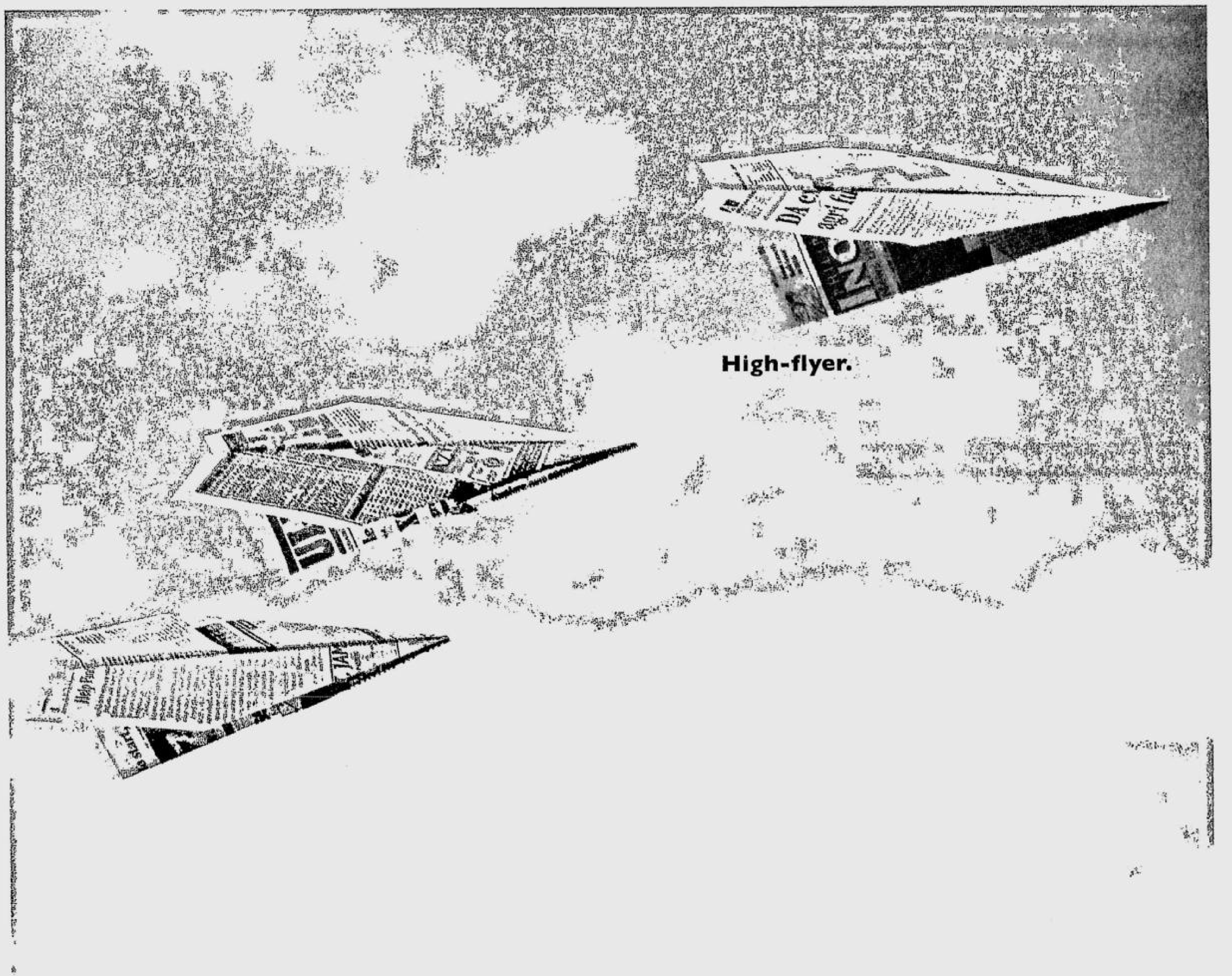
EDSA Shangri-La's Lounge on Valentine's Day is the stage for "Love Letters," featuring Karylle and Nyoy Volante and the Mannos. Buffet dinner starts at 6:30 p.m. Advance reservations recommended. Call 633-8888, locals 2738 and 2739

NYOY Volante and Karylle

Your guide this week

- "An Early Valentine" with Giselle Sanchez; tonight at Siete Pecados, Westin Philippine Plaza. Call 551-5555.
- "An Evening with the Voice: Russell Watson" with guest Ima Castro, British conductor Sir William Hayward and the San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra; Feb. 10 at the PICC Plenary Hall. Call Ticketworld, 891-9999 or 891-5610.
- "Queens... On Fire" with Pops Fernandez and Regine Velasquez; Feb. 11 and 12, 8:30 p.m. at the Philsports Arena. Call 891-5610.
- "The Love Songs of Streisand, Legrand and Groban," with Kuh Ledesma and Christian Bautista; Feb. 11, 12, 13 and 14, 9 p.m. at the Captain's Bar, Mandarin Oriental. Call Mandarin Oriental, 750-8888; or Ticketworld.
- "No More Lonely Nights with Rico J." featuring Rico J. Puno with guests Ella V and Jennifer Lee of Viva Hotbabes; Feb. 11 and 12 at the Music Museum. Call 721-6726.
- "Revólver: Five Videoke Nights—You Are Professional Singer" with bands, Drip, Imago, Pedicab, Sun Valley Crew and Wolfmann; Feb. 12 at Saguijo Bar, 7612 Guijo St. San Antonio Village, Makati City.
- Bituin Escalante; Feb. 12, 8 p.m. at the Greenbelt 3 Park. Free admission.
- "America Live in Manila," Feb. 12, 13 and 14 at the NBC Tent, The Fort, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig. Call Ticketworld.
- "Golden Legends" starring John Ford Coley, Gordon Waller of the Peter and Gordon duo and Latino idol Chris Montez with John Lesaca and RJ Jacinto; Feb. 12 at the CCP Aliw Theater and Feb. 13 and 14 at the Hard Rock Cafe. Call Ticketworld, or Hard Rock Cafe, 893-4661 to 64.
- "Love at the Bellevue" with Jose Mari Chan and Janet Basco; Feb. 12, 8:30 p.m. at The Bellevue Hotel Grand Ballroom. Call 711-8181.
- Side A Band; Feb. 13, 5 p.m. at the Glorietta Activity Center. Free admission.
- "My Heart's Love" featuring Ivy Violan; Feb. 14, 7 p.m. at the Rigodon Ballroom of The Manila Peninsula. Call 776-9359, 823-2974 and 0917-9011333.
- "Faces of Love," with Gary Valenciano and Zsa Zsa Padilla; Feb. 14 and 15, 8 p.m. at Le Pavilion, Roxas Boulevard. Call Ticketworld, or Ticketnet, 911-5555.
- "Power of Love" featuring Ogie Alcasid with guests Kyla, Rachelle Ann Go and Myx DJ Iya; Feb. 14 and 15 at the Music Museum. Call 721-6726.
- "Chips and Ale (A Boyleque Revue)" with the Viva Hot Men and Friends; Feb. 14 at Club Mwah! 3/F Venue Tower, 652 Boni Ave., Mandaluyong City. Call 535-7943 or 631-6009.
- "Love According to Rebekah," Feb. 14 at Republic of Malate. Call 551-7253 to 55.
- "Love, Soul and Laughter" featuring Aretha and the Soul'd Out Band and Bernie Uy at Merk's Bar and Bistro; Feb. 14. Call 757-4720 or 757-4721.
- "My Funniest Valentine" with K and the boxers, Dingdong Dantes and Rufa Mae Quinto; Feb. 15, 9 p.m. at Soundstage in Cainta. Call 0917-5349373 or 0917-8177926.

RUSSELL WATSON



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Nielsen Media Research 727-3701 to 20

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER News that makes a difference

Alan Alda, Jimmy Smits start race for the White House

LOS ANGELES—It's shaping up as the biggest political battle ever portrayed on a US television series, but the executive producer of "The West Wing" swears he has no idea whether a Democrat or Republican will be elected the show's next president.

John Wells insists that real-life politics has little bearing on the outcome of the fictional White House race now unfolding on the Emmy-winning NBC series between candidates played by former "M*A*S*H" star Alan Alda (the Republican) and "NYPD Blue" veteran Jimmy Smits (the Democrat).

Instead, Wells says the show's next occupant of the Oval Office, succeeding current star Martin Sheen, will be determined by which character the writers ultimately feel is the "most compelling" to the audience.

Wells told a recent gathering of TV critics: "We actually watch what's happening between the cast members, the issues presented... and try and follow what makes the most story sense, what's giving you the greatest amount of drama."

The show, now in its sixth year as President Josiah "Jed" Bartlet (Sheen) nears the end of his second term, is building to a season-ending climax with back-to-back episodes depicting the Republican and Democratic national conventions.

Producers plan to return in the fall with the election, followed by the inauguration of a new president—Smits or Alda—next winter. Sheen will stay on into next season, but his profile will diminish as Bartlet returns to private life.

Nuanced characters

"We're hoping that by the time we get into the fall, that there will be a real question in the viewer's mind as to who would make the better president," Wells said. "They both have their strengths and weaknesses."

Indeed, neither Smits' nor Alda's character is a party ideologue. Both depict candidates who are politically moderate and disarmingly likable—far more nuanced than the Republican challenger played by James Brolin, who was defeated by Bartlet's reelection in the show's fourth season.

Smits portrays a young congressman from Houston, Matthew Santos, who is reluctantly recruited to run by Bartlet loyalist Josh Lyman. Alda plays veteran California Sen. Arnold Vinick, who throws his hat into the ring after his wife dies.

Both characters are endowed with a manifest integrity and thoughtfulness, in keeping with "The West Wing's" enduring appeal as a show about wish fulfillment.

Wells said viewers should not assume that the Democratic affiliation of the show's current administration—and all of its central characters—has preordained a victory for Smits.

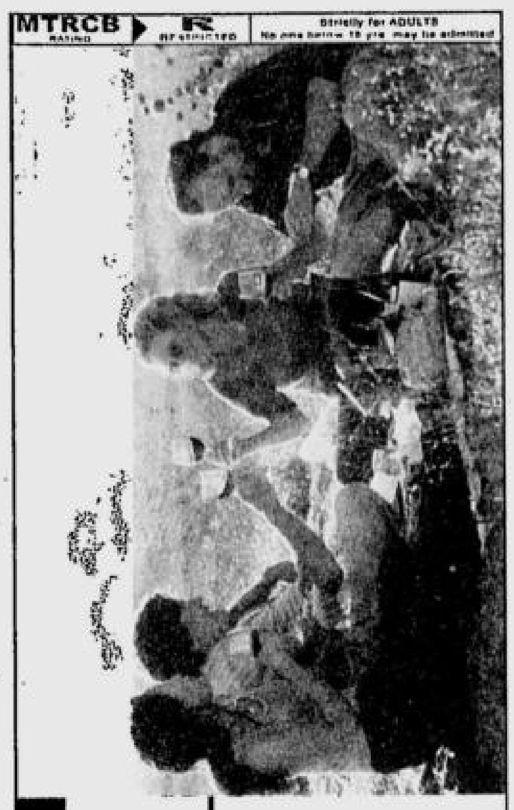
Nor should they think that the current conservative climate in Washington necessarily spells a TV mandate for Alda.

Even-handed drama

He noted that while Republicans now control the White House and both houses of Congress, public opinion polls show Americans "are mostly in the middle" on key issues that divide the two major parties.

Likewise, Wells dismissed what he called a misconception about the show—that its audience is overwhelmingly Democratic and agrees with Bartlet's politics.

"That's actually not true, and I can prove it by our mail bag every week," he said. "We have a very, very large Republican audience that loves to watch the show and throw things at the screen." *Reuters*



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4 (DTS)	ELEKTRA

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(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3327

1	ELEKTRA
2	DREAMBOY
3 (DOLBY)	LET THE LOVE BEGIN

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	DREAMBOY
2	KUNG FU HUSTLE
3	SINFUL NIGHTS
4 (DTS)	

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
2	DREAMBOY
3 (DTS)	LET THE LOVE BEGIN
4	ELEKTRA
5	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1	DREAMBOY
2	LET THE LOVE BEGIN
3 (DTS)	ELEKTRA
4 (DOLBY)	MEET THE FOCKERS

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	DREAMBOY
2	LET THE LOVE BEGIN
3	A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT
4	SHALL WE DANCE

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1	DREAMBOY
2	KUNG FU HUSTLE

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'Most successful rescue mission in US history'

By Pablo A. Tariman
Contributor

A $50-MILLION movie bankrolled by US media giant Miramax about "the most successful rescue mission in American history," which stars Hollywood actor Benjamin Bratt alongside Cesar Montano, is set to hit theaters worldwide in August, a Hollywood producer said on Monday.

According to Marty Katz, "The Great Raid" which also has in the cast Joe Fiennes, James Franco and some 20 Filipino actors, tells the story of how Filipino guerrillas led by Capt. Juan Pajota backed the US troops in rescuing American POWs on Jan. 8, 1945.

Like a movie

Katz said he first became interested in the story when he read the best-seller "Ghost Soldiers" by Hampton Sides and "The Great Raid on Cabanatuan" by William B. Breuer.

The concentration camp in Cabanatuan was the largest maintained by Japanese forces during the war. American prisoners, kept in squalid conditions, thought they had been forgotten.

"This (rescue) was a massive operation that had very little chance of success. It's like a Hollywood movie—it couldn't really happen, but it did. That was why we were attracted to the material," Katz said.

He added that Montano's performance as Captain Pajota in his first international movie was "riveting."

And so it's official: Montano is now a Hollywood actor.

Very little compromise

Directed by John Dahl ("The Last Seduction," "Rounders"), the film was shot on location in Shanghai and Australia in three months in 2002 and is partly being promoted in Manila to mark the 60th anniversary of the liberation.

Katz who was supervising producer of James Cameron's "Titanic" said most of the major roles in the true-to-life rescue account were played by real Filipinos and Japanese actors.

"The only time we compromised a bit was when a few Australians played American soldiers in the film," he said.

Sides, author of "Ghost Soldiers," on which part of the film was based, also graced the press conference at the Shangri-La Makati.

"It took 60 years to finally get this story told but it has finally happened and it is great to be here in the Philippines," said Sides. "It drives the point that while this is a very stirring Hollywood drama, it is also based on real events and it is really extraordinary that this story isn't better known."

Katz read a special message sent by Bob Prince, one of the surviving assault commanders of the Cabanatuan raid.

"The Cabanatuan raid was a success, and the POWS were rescued only because we were assisted by two Filipino guerrilla forces led by Capt. Juan Pajota and Capt. Eduardo Joson. Not only did the Filipino forces provide flank and rear guard protection, with the help of local villagers, they provided us with with 50 ox (carabao) carts that allowed us to get the POWs back to safety. We couldn't have done it without the help of the Filipino guerrillas and the support of local villagers of Nueva Ecija and for that we will be forever grateful," Prince wrote in his letter which was hand-carried by Katz.

Australian find

Also playing a major role in the movie is Filipina-Australian actress Natalie Jackson Mendoza, whose father is from Calamba, Laguna.

She won roles in the musicals "Miss Saigon" and "Les Miserables," and appeared in the movie "Moulin Rouge."

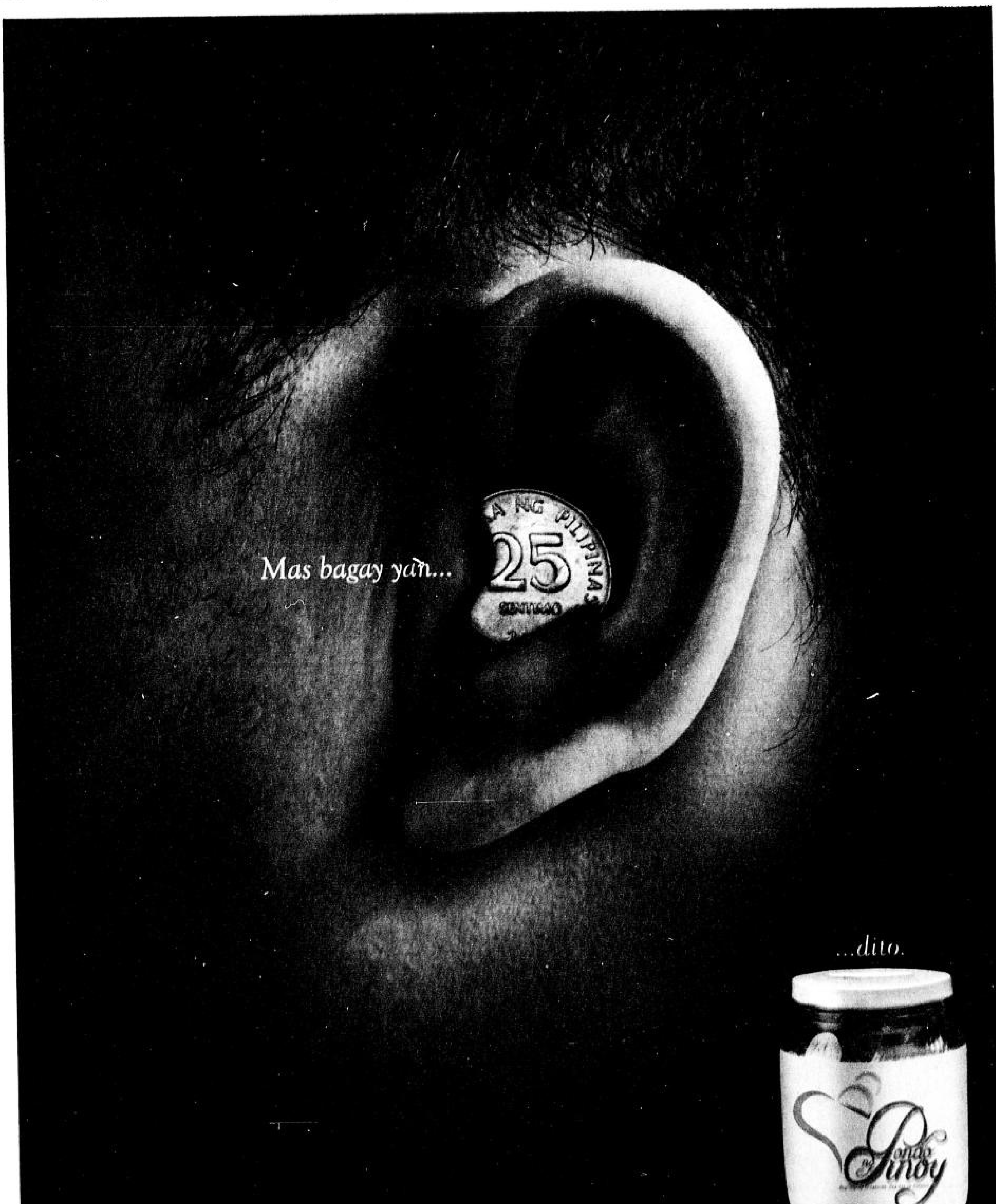
"'The Great Raid' enabled me to appreciate my Filipino roots and to know first-hand, at least on film, the great heroism of the Filipinos in the last World War," Mendoza said.

Other Filipinos in the movie are Ebong Joson, Mars Cavestany and RJ Leyran who passed away last year.

Montano's brother, Rommel, also plays one of the Filipino guerrillas.

With AFP

CARNIVAL! A dancer performs with the Mangueira samba school at the Sambodrome in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on Monday. Similar carnivals held across the Caribbean, from Martinique to Haiti, all concluded yesterday.



US not afraid of 'Boogeyman'

LOS ANGELES—Moviegoers showed that they weren't afraid of the "Boogeyman," pushing the horror flick to the top of the weekend box office with a $19.5 million debut.

"Spider-Man" director Sam Raimi's film about a man who tries to overcome his fear of what's lurking in the closet by spending a night in his boyhood home beat romantic comedy "The Wedding Date," which opened at No. 2 with $11 million, according to studio estimates Sunday.

The road-trip comedy "Are We There Yet?" slipped into third with $10.4 million, raising its total after 17 days to $51.1 million. Last weekend's No. 1 movie, "Hide and Seek," dropped into fourth place with $8.9 million, lifting its 10-day gross to $35.7 million.

As with recent horror movies "Hide and Seek," "White Noise," and "Saw," "Boogeyman" overcame harsh critical reaction to draw in the faithful horror crowd. "Boogeyman" was not screened for critics, generally a sign that the studio knows a movie will get bad reviews.

Trailers for "Boogeyman" ran before screenings of "The Grudge," allowing it to ride the coattails of that $100 million hit.

$7-M budget

"I certainly believe it's a genre where people are going to be more moved by the marketing materials they see for the movie than by what the critics say," said Rory Bruer, head of distribution for Sony Pictures, whose Screen Gems banner released "Boogeyman," which was made on a $7 million budget.

Another comparatively low-cost movie that is expected to turn a solid profit despite being trashed by critics is "The Wedding Date." With a budget under $15 million, the film stars Debra Messing as a woman w ho hires a male escort as her companion to a wedding to show up her ex-fiance, who is the best man.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at North American theaters, according to Exhibitor Relations Co. Inc.:

1) "Boogeyman," $19.5 million.
2) "The Wedding Date," $11 million.
3) "Are We There Yet?", $10.4 million.
4) "Hide and Seek," $8.9 million.
5) "Million Dollar Baby," $8.8 million.
6) "The Aviator," $5.4 million.
7) "Meet the Fockers," $5 million.
8) "Sideways," $4.8 million.
9) "Racing Stripes," $4.43 million.
10) "Coach Carter," $4.4 million.

AP

BARRY Watson in "Boogeyman"